Canada

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THE ROLE OF

TRANSPORTATION

IN CANADIAN IMMIGRATION 1900-2000

2000 Canada

by Theresa Wallace

"It is customary to talk about how hard immigrants work and how ambitious they are, but those of us who have lived that process know that it is mainly the dream that counts.

"I'm not talking here of fantasy. I am talking of the true dream that is caught in the web of the past as it meets the wind of the future. All of us have this, even if we do not express it. This is what gives a nation, such as ours, its resonance, its depth and its strength.

"The dream pulls us on and transforms us into Canadians. The dream gives us the strength to avoid being stereotyped by the past or limited by the expectations of others. The dream brings openness, adventure and, of course, pain and confusion. But, as Leonard Cohen observes, 'There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in.'"

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson
Governor General of Canada
Installation speech, October 7, 1999

Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada.

Photographer: Andrew MacNaughtan.

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The opinions expressed in this book are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect federal government policy or opinion.

Theresa Wallace

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O V E R V I E W

The Role of Transportation in Canadian Immigration 1900–2000, part of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's Millennium Project, is the second in a series of publications on citizenship and immigration issues.

The first publication in the series, *Forging Our Legacy: Canadian Citizenship and Immigration, 1900–1977*, by Valerie Knowles, examines in detail the waves of immigration and how immigrants contributed to Canada's development during this period.

The present publication, however, highlights the role played by transportation in the history of immigration during the 20th century and takes a look at the future. It traces the key changes in how newcomers came here: first arriving by boat and then travelling overland by train until, eventually, the jetliner became the preferred means of travel over both sea and land. Just as modes of transportation changed, so did immigration and refugee policy in this country and, by the end of the century, Canada's ethnic distribution had altered significantly as a result.

A series of exhibits called "Gateway to Canada" were prepared in partnership with airports across Canada as a companion project to mark the millennium. The exhibits, to be shown at various locations in 2001 and 2002, will celebrate both the old and the new modes of transportation and their role in building this country. Airport travellers will see a mix of archival and present-day photographs in a thought-provoking graphic collage designed to stimulate the imagination. (See pages 80 and 81).

The present publication features a number of photographs and quotations intended to give the reader a better idea of the impressions of immigrants and immigration officials, as well as giving a "face" to immigrants and immigration itself. During the past century, millions of newcomers have shaped and developed Canada's identity through successive waves of immigration. This is the story of how they made that journey.

CHAPTER 1

ACROSS BY BOAT, OVERLAND BY TRAIN

Chapter 1

ACROSS BY BOAT, OVERLAND BY TRAIN

"I was standing in the bow, along with many others, staring with great anticipation in the direction where land was expected. Suddenly a black stripe appeared above the fog. At first I thought it was a dark cloud, but then everybody cheered 'land ahoy!' What was visible above the fog were dark-green wooded hills. And in no time the last patch of fog was gone. I thought I could even smell the wonderful fragrance of the distant forest, a fabulous, happy feeling. Nova Scotia, Canada, our new homeland, was spread out before our eyes in the sunshine, with green forests, white houses, and the city of Halifax."[1]

In the first half of the 20th century and even beyond, getting to Canada wasn't easy. It was a physical and metaphorical journey that etched itself forever on the minds of those old enough to remember their passage.

During this period, most immigrants came from Europe and travelled by ocean liner to various ports of entry along the Atlantic coast, or up the St. Lawrence River to Québec City or Montréal. Once the newcomers had disembarked and cleared the medical examinations and other paperwork involved in immigration, they boarded trains that took them to their destinations, or as close to them as the railways would take them. Some of those who had no work or shelter awaiting them ended up living temporarily in one of the immigration halls set up across the country for that purpose.

With advances in aviation technology and the evolution of airplanes and airport infrastructure, air travel gradually eclipsed ocean passage as the fastest and most economical way to get to Canada. The airplane had been used for humanitarian purposes in the 1920s to deliver vaccines and to support other efforts. Canada built on this tradition by developing expertise in moving thousands of refugees quickly

Immigrants sometimes had to wait for a long time on the wharves of the British harbours (Liverpool, London, Belfast) before they could embark for Canada.

Association des travailleurs immigrants du Québec, 92 592 11A.

and efficiently by air to this country. During the 1960s and 1970s, there was movement toward a less discriminatory policy, one that would allow immigration from non-traditional source countries. Before 1962, only three percent of immigrants who came to Canada were from Asia. By the mid-1970s, the proportion of European-born immigrants had declined steadily while that of immigrants born outside Europe had increased, with immigrants from Asia, the Middle East and the Caribbean predominating. As a result of falling transportation costs, increasing air travel and the dismantling of barriers to immigration from non-traditional source countries, Canada's international airports were becoming busy ports of entry and the groundwork was being laid for a whole new era in immigration.

Early Immigration Campaigns

"Winnipeg, no less than Canada itself, owes its existence in large measure to Sir Clifford Sifton's immigration policies. No Canadian history ignores this policy or fails to mention the hundreds of thousands of settlers who came to Canada as the direct result of it. But my generation knew nothing of Sifton or policies of immigration. We knew only the end result of his policy as it was personified by a funny-looking little immigrant boy standing by the edge of the Norquay schoolyard watching the rest of us play soccer, and wanting passionately to participate."[2]

A century ago, Canada looked quite different. In 1900, it consisted of only seven provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba and British Columbia) and two territories (Northwest Territories and Yukon). Of this country's 5.4 million people, two percent were Aboriginal people, 57 percent were of British origin, 30.7 percent were of French origin and the remainder came from various other countries.

2. James H. Gray, *The Boy from Winnipeg* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1970), 38.

By the turn of the century, the economic depression that had gripped Europe and North America had lifted. The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) had been completed in 1885. There was a strong demand for Canadian wheat, but the problem was finding the people to populate the Prairies and work the farmland to meet that demand. Sir Clifford Sifton, who became Minister of the Interior in Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Liberal government elected in 1896, took up the challenge.

Sifton simplified regulations, making it easier for immigrants to stake out their own homesteads. He got rid of the land grants system that had allowed the CPR to keep blocks of land free of settlers and mounted a huge campaign to fill up what was, from his point of view, empty space. In addition to admitting immigrants from traditional source countries such as Great Britain, the United States and northern Europe to work the land, Sifton expanded the fields of recruitment into other parts of Europe. (The Ukrainians were the largest group to immigrate from eastern and southern Europe during those years, and by 1913, approximately 170,000 of them had found their way to the Canadian Prairies.) Sifton made sure his recruiting efforts were successful by appointing immigration agents in many countries and advertising aggressively through handbills, newspapers and periodicals. He offered land to people who chose to make the Prairies their home and, to attract the "stalwart peasants" needed to push back the western frontier, he staged other high-profile recruitment campaigns. One such campaign involved arrangements with an Amsterdam-based organization of booking agents and steamship company officials. Under the terms of the North Atlantic Trading Company contract, the Company agreed to direct farmers to Canada, earning a bonus from the Immigration Department for each settler. The organization's operations were kept secret, however, because at the time, most European countries had restrictive emigration laws and the agents involved were risking prosecution.[3] Sifton resigned in 1905, but the results of his campaign were felt right up until 1913. Two and a half million immigrants came to Canada between 1904 and 1913.

[3] Valerie Knowles, *Forging Our Legacy: Canadian Citizenship and Immigration, 1900-1977* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000), 12.

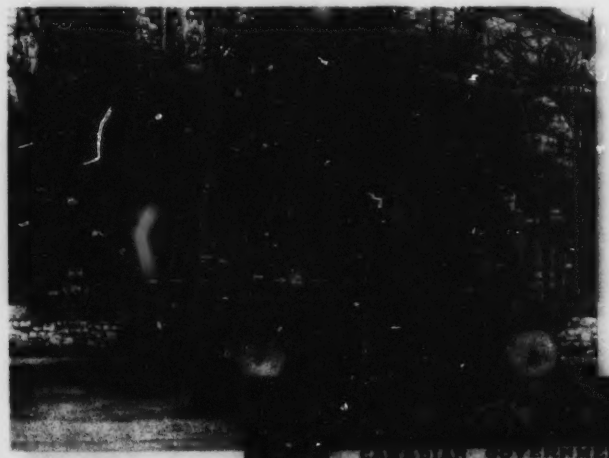
Immigrants arriving at the Quebec City harbour at the beginning of the 20th century.

Association des travailleurs immigrants du Quebec, 92-592-7B

Canadian Pacific Limited 4121

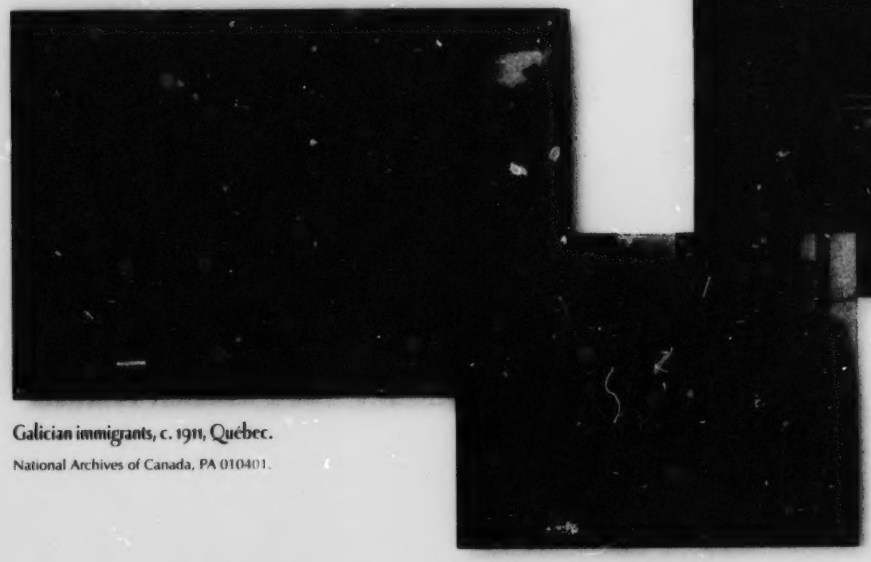
Many immigrants who boarded ships with high hopes for better lives died at Grosse-Île, a quarantine station in the St. Lawrence Estuary from 1832 to 1937. Grosse-Île, with its tragic history of cholera and typhus epidemics, became a national historic site in 1984.

National Archives of Canada, C120285.



In the absence of mass communications, various other methods were used to encourage people to emigrate to Canada.

National Archives of Canada, C 9671 and C 75991.



Galician immigrants, c. 1911, Québec.

National Archives of Canada, PA 010401.

Ontario immigration officers, c. 1920.

National Archives of Canada, RD-834.

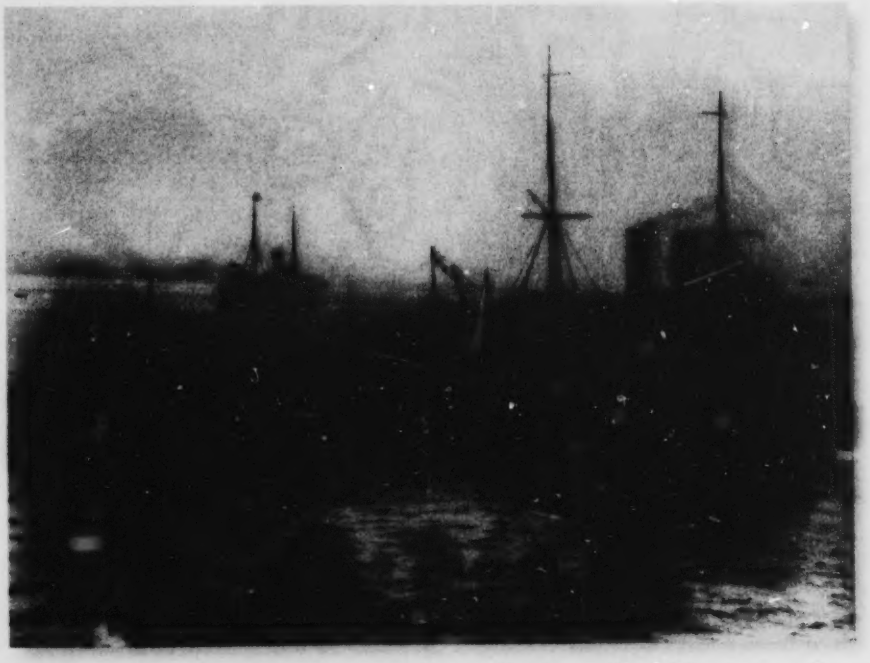
In 1908, an immigration inspection service was established at 37 points along the Ontario and Manitoba borders shared with the United States. That same year, the Laurier government amended the 1906 *Immigration Act* and introduced a continuous-journey regulation. Would-be immigrants, who all travelled by ship then unless they were coming overland from the United States, were now required to arrive in Canada from the country of which they were natives or citizens, and on a ticket purchased in that country. The government, wanting to stop the flow of immigrants from Asia, had signed an agreement with Japan in 1907 limiting the number of male immigrants from that country to 400 per year, but no such agreement was in place with the government of British India. Since no shipping company provided direct passage from India to Canada, the new 1908 continuous-journey regulation effectively banned immigrants from India.

On the West Coast

Immigration to British Columbia in the early part of the 20th century was much lower than that to the Prairies but still noteworthy. More than a few immigrants pushed beyond the mountains to settle in that province which, because it was on the Pacific coast, also attracted immigrants from Asia. In 1904, the first immigrants from India arrived in Victoria and Vancouver. By 1905, there were 5,000 such immigrants in British Columbia, most of whom were Sikhs who had mortgaged their land at 10- to 12-percent interest to raise the $65 they needed for their fare. Japanese immigrants, mostly from small, poor fishing and farming villages, numbered 10,000 by 1910. The Chinese who had built the British Columbia leg of the CPR in the 1880s, and their descendants, had also settled primarily in that province, although many of them had gone east to look for work.

A crew of Chinese farm workers plants tobacco in a Kelowna field, c. 1910.
Kelowna Museum.

One of the most dramatic incidents in Canadian immigration history occurred in 1914 when the *Komagata Maru*, with close to 400 people on board, anchored in Burrard Inlet opposite Vancouver on May 23. The passengers, mostly poor East Indians, stood on the deck dressed in their best clothes, waiting to disembark. The mission of their leader, a wealthy Sikh named Gurdit Singh, was to challenge Canada's colour bar and use the landing as a test case with ramifications for the whole British Empire. In a story involving spies, international intrigue and high drama, the ship—minus some



The *Komagata Maru* (large ship on left) and the HMCS *Rainbow* (large ship in foreground) in English Bay, Vancouver. The infamous *Komagata* incident, from May to July 1914, involved the arrival of 376 immigrants from India who were barred entry into Canada despite the fact that they all had valid passports.

National Archives of Canada, C 46574.

passengers who were actually returning residents of Canada and who, therefore, were allowed to disembark—was turned back and forced to leave the harbour two months later. Locals cheered as Canada's HMCS *Rainbow* escorted the *Komagata Maru* into international waters.

In 1919, as a result of political pressure from the Sikhs, a federal order-in-council was passed to allow "British Hindus residing in Canada" to bring in their immediate family members. The continuous-journey regulation, however, stayed in effect until 1947 and was finally repealed in 1977.

Canadian Transportation Interests

The introduction of steam power in the 1800s revolutionized transportation in Canada. Indeed, the railway helped to create Canada and speed up its development. By 1914, however, with almost one mile of railway for every 200 people, the country had built beyond its resources and several privately owned railroads were on the verge of financial collapse. One of these was the Great Northern, which the federal government took over in 1917. Two years later, the federal government created the Canadian National Railways (CNR), a Crown corporation, which then set out to acquire the assets of four other financially strapped railroads, including the Grand Trunk. Today, the corporation, one of the world's major transportation and communication systems, is called Canadian National.

Many railways also had shipping interests, but none of them could compare in volume with those developed by the Canadian Pacific Railway. The CPR began shipping in 1884, first by servicing the Great Lakes and then, in 1891, launching the famous Empress line from Vancouver to what was then known as the Orient. At first, the CPR transported mainly trade goods and mail, but moving people ended up being lucrative as well.

By 1914, the CPR was one of the world's biggest ship owners, boasting about one hundred ships, 30 of them servicing the Atlantic. The CPR concentrated on its ocean fleet to help advance immigration and settlement in Western Canada. The fleet enabled the company to offer combined rates to inland destinations, which had been difficult to secure with independent lines. Its steamer agents promoted direct passage through advertising, wanting to make sure that Europeans travelled directly to Canada instead of disembarking at American ports and remaining in the United States. By equipping freighters with steerage—a section in a ship allotted to passengers paying the lowest fares—the CPR was able to

The first contingent of Savoyards leaving for Lac Saint-Jean, Quebec, under the direction of the St. Jean Repatriation and Colonization Society, 1904.

National Archives of Canada, C 6081

Group on the platform of the Canadian Pacific Railway station, Frank, Alberta, c. 1913.

National Archives of Canada, PA 125311

The *Metagama*, operated by Canadian Pacific from 1915 to 1955.

National Archives of Canada, PA 166332

Immigrants leaving Liverpool, England, for Canada on the *Empress of Britain*, c. 1925.
National Archives of Canada, PA 021333.

Canadian Pacific agency in Lemberg, Poland, which closed in 1952.
Canadian Pacific Limited, A-8119.

increase the number of people it could accommodate. The popular Empress liners, in particular, increased business in all classes.[4]

The CPR paid particular attention to its third-class passengers from the very beginning. Although many companies at that time provided their steerage passengers with only the barest necessities, the CPR advertised that it would supply them with a bed, a pillow, a blanket and a full set of cutlery free of charge. It also provided as many third-class passengers as possible with cabins and china tableware.

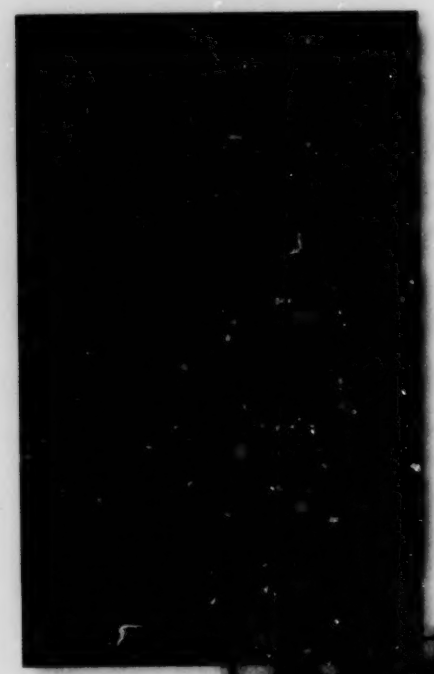
Ships often carried a thousand passengers, in addition to the crew, on each Atlantic crossing, which took a week or more. Anything that made the trip more comfortable for the immigrants was considered a bonus. For travellers overcome by seasickness and unable to join the card games, musical entertainment and other amusements on deck, a comfortable bed was especially important.

Not all of the CPR's steamer services were a success. In 1913, in the hopes of diverting more immigrants to Canada, the CPR

4. W. Kaye Lamb, *History of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1977), 251.

renamed the liners *Lake Champlain* and *Lake Erie* the *Ruthenia* and the *Tyrolia*, and placed them on the Trieste-to-Montréal run. Not only did the run not pay, but it angered the German shipping line authorities who believed that only their ships should handle Austrian immigrant traffic. The resulting feud led to the arrest of the CPR's Vienna staff on a trumped-up charge, and a court battle ensued. Among the accusations levelled at the CPR was that it had bribed 600,000 Austrians of military age to come to Canada. It turned out that the two Canadian ships had carried only 13,000 immigrants, but before this and other facts could be established, the First World War broke out and the proceedings lapsed.[5]

Before the First World War, Canada had experienced an unprecedented boom in immigration that settled the Prairies, built railways and bridges, and provided strong backs and hands for the mines. But in 1919, in tune with postwar sentiment, the *Immigration Act* was amended. The amended Act and the order-in-council issued under its authority closed Canada to its wartime enemies and increased its focus on British and American immigrants.



Canadian Pacific Limited, A-6043.

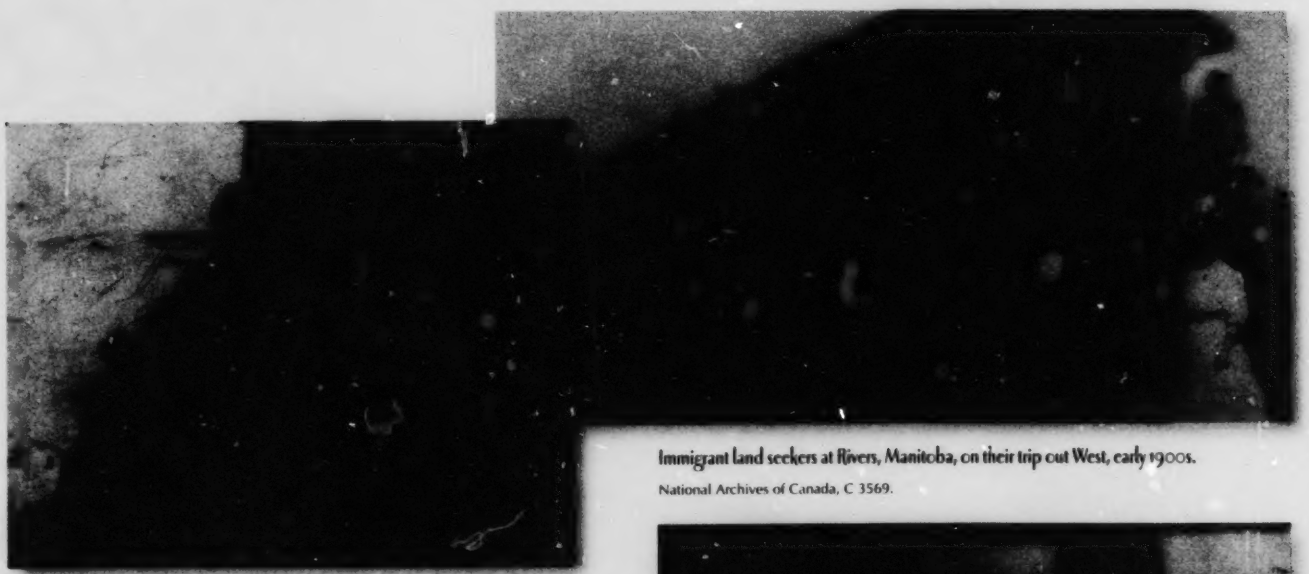
Immigrants aboard the *Empress of Scotland* en route to Canada, 1924.

Canadian Pacific Limited, 17695.

Canada, however, was losing people faster than they were coming in. From 1915 to 1925, an estimated 400,000 more people left Canada than came to stay. Canadian industrialists and farmers added their voices to those of the mining and transportation industries, urging the federal government to introduce a less restrictive immigration policy.

In response to this pressure, the Mackenzie King government lowered the barriers to European immigration, first by removing restrictions against immigrants from Germany and its wartime allies. Then, in 1925, it signed an agreement with the CPR and the CNR that allowed

5. Lamb, 250.

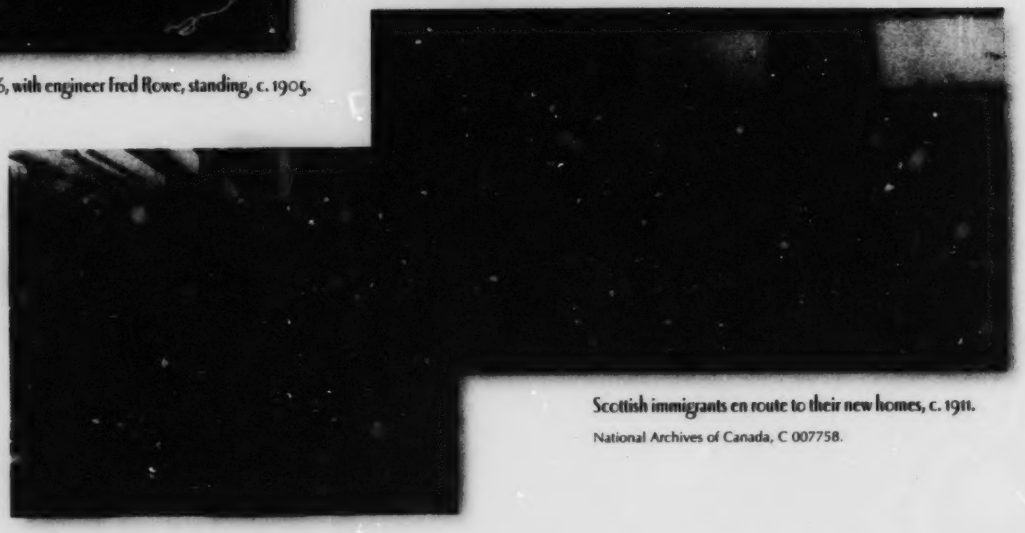


Immigrant land seekers at Rivers, Manitoba, on their trip out West, early 1900s.

National Archives of Canada, C 3569.

Canadian Pacific Railway engine no. 206, with engineer Fred Rowe, standing, c. 1905.

National Archives of Canada, C 54467.



Interior of a Canadian Pacific railway car bringing immigrants to Western Canada, c. 1908.

Western Canada Pictorial Index, 163-5122.

Scottish immigrants en route to their new homes, c. 1911.

National Archives of Canada, C 007758.

them to recruit bona fide European agriculturalists from countries that had previously been designated as "non-preferred" by immigration authorities. Bent on serving their own ends, the railways ignored many of the agreement's provisions and used it instead as a means to recruit low-paid foreign workers. Throughout this boom period, Canadian Pacific spent more money attracting immigrants than the Canadian government did, and also had more agents in Europe and the United States.

Train Travel

"Special immigrant trains were waiting on spur lines on either side of the Annex. Immigrants would travel to points throughout Canada as the final leg of their long journey. For Ma, her final destination was Montreal. The immigrant trains or colonist trains as they were called were primitive in nature. Coal burning stoves at each end of the cars provided the only heat. Dining facilities left much to be desired and most people brought their own food. The seats were made of wood and a platform was located above the seat where a brave soul could climb up and attempt to sleep. Babies cried, the odor of dirty diapers and unwashed bodies permeated the cars. This was an end to a long journey and the discomfort would be endured. Anticipation was great! The train jerked and clanged its way through cities, towns and miles of wilderness, whistling at every train crossing."[6]

> "Dazzled by sun and drugged
> by space they wait
>
> These homeless peoples, at our
> prairie gate
>
> Dumb with the awe of those
> whom fate has hurled
>
> Breathless, upon the threshold
> of a world!"[7]

Rail yards were located at ports of entry, and after immigrants were processed, those who were accepted boarded waiting immigrant trains. The coal-burning stoves left passengers covered in soot and either too hot or too cold, depending on where they sat. The trains didn't improve much over the next few decades. One immigrant, who came to Canada from the Netherlands in 1952, felt keenly the glaring contrast between the romantic image and reality. Willem Kreeft, who started his journey to Alberta in Halifax, recalled that the immigrant trains were "dirty and very short on all of the amenities for daily life. When I entered Grade 1, the class was asked to draw a picture of a train. I did so and coloured the whole train black. The teacher spanked me for not using other colours, and for not taking a realistic view of trains."[8]

Nor was it always the case that immigrants could breathe a sigh of relief when their train had brought them to their destination. James Gray described the activity in and around the railway stations of

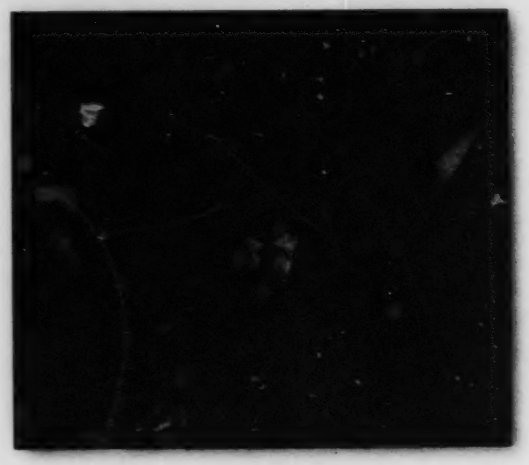
6. Mirja S. Bishop, recounting her mother's 1929 journey to Canada from Finland. From the Pier 21 Web site at www.pier21.ns.ca/stories/mbishop.html.

7. Isabel Ecclestone Mackay, as quoted in Robert M. Hamilton, comp., *Canadian Quotations and Phrases: Literary and Historical* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1952), 105.

8. Willem Kreeft, recounting his family's 1952 journey to Canada from the Netherlands. From the Pier 21 Web site at www.pier21.ns.ca/stories/kreeft.html.

The Butler family being examined by a Canadian government immigration officer on board a ship.

National Archives of Canada, PA 181005.



Left to right: William A. Mather, President, Canadian Pacific Railway, C.D. Howe, Minister of Transport, and Donald Gordon, President, Canadian National Railways, 1952.

National Archives of Canada, PA 121813.

Winnipeg during the early boom period of immigration when the only practical way to get to Winnipeg, or to leave it, was by train:

> "In and around the railway stations were usually concentrated the greatest assemblage of pimps, pickpockets, confidence men, thugs, and sneak thieves in the country. The confidence men—'boosters,' they were called—concentrated on immigrants and farmers. Many of them were products of the North End slums and could speak half a dozen languages which enabled them to lure the immigrants into their webs. If the newcomers got past the confidence men, they had to contend with the snatch-and-run baggage thieves who hung around watching for something to steal. Pickpockets were such a menace that the police department had a special detail which concentrated on 'dips.'"[9]

9. Gray, 9.

On a more positive note, when immigrants did not have jobs or a place to live, they were fed and sometimes housed in immigration halls across the country, usually located next to rail lines. These halls, located in Halifax, Saint John, Québec, Montréal, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver and Victoria, had individual rooms for families and separate dining areas, and served as central points for voluntary agencies that assisted newcomers.

Trains were also used to help streamline the immigration process for new arrivals. Joe Bissett, who was a young immigration officer in Québec City in the 1950s, recalls that he and his colleagues would take a train up to Pointe-au-Père to meet the ocean liners en route to Québec City. They would board the liners with the physician responsible for medical examinations and complete the immigration paperwork on board while the liner travelled toward the Québec port. Bissett and his colleagues always found these trips a bit of an adventure, and on several occasions, one of their number would lose his footing climbing up the ocean liner's ladder and end up in the St. Lawrence River.

Immigration officer Joe Bissett (second from right) and fellow officers boarding the *Empress of Britain* on the St. Lawrence River, off Pointe-au-Père near Québec City, September 1956.

J.B. Bissett collection

This promotional poster was lithographed in 1929 when Pier 21 was the key entry point for immigrants to Canada.

Canadian Pacific Limited, A-6143

Pier 21: The Front Door to Canada

"We boarded the *Franconia* at Liverpool and hit unusually heavy gales on the way over. At one point we were stopped for twenty-four hours before they restarted the engines, and then again for twelve hours.

"The ships had been used during the war and were only recently converted so they were not very comfortable for passengers. When we finally arrived in Halifax, we went straight onto the trains although I do remember that the church groups were very well organized, and most passengers were met by ministers of their faith.

"There were a number of war brides on the boat and the train, and Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were very frightening to us. We travelled through snow-covered wilderness with only the occasional wooden house throughout all the daylight hours . . . " [10]

[Unidentified war bride]

Since the majority of immigrants during this period were from Europe and came by boat, many of them entered Canada through Halifax, the nearest port of entry. Halifax had been declared an official port of entry in January 1881, and by the start of the First World War, it had processed hundreds of thousands of immigrants.

Until 1917, when it was destroyed in the Halifax explosion, all arrivals were processed at Pier 2 in the north end of Halifax, conveniently located near the North Street railway station. Makeshift facilities made it difficult after that to process floods of immigrants, especially at the end of the First World War.

In 1924, a new facility was opened adjoining the south end railway station, consisting of a complex of buildings connected by ramp to the station. For decades, it would be known as Pier 21 although for the first few years, it was called Transit Shed 21. The complex housed government departments—such as Immigration, Customs, Health and Welfare, and Agriculture—and the Red Cross. It also had a waiting room, a restaurant/dining room, a canteen for purchasing supplies, a nursery, a hospital (including an operating room), a detention centre, a kitchen, dormitories and a walkway overlooking the harbour. One early observer described the scene at Pier 21 this way:

10. Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, *The Pier 21 Story: Halifax, 1924–1971* (Halifax: Employment and Immigration Canada, 1978), 18.

"An immense throng of men, women and children crowds an interior starkly illuminated by overhead lamps. The multitude may easily surpass the number of a thousand. A certain cheerful restlessness prevails; everywhere there is movement . . . The floor lies ankle deep with orange peel and paper, and above the perpetual [babble] of children's voices rises the strident tones of the loudspeaker announcing heavy baggage ready for inspection. The medley of sound is punctuated by repeated vocal reminders of their presence by telegraph company representatives on hand for business. Intended as a place of rest and supposedly occupied by persons merely waiting to go aboard their trains, the hall is in reality a maze where some mothers are anxiously tracking down wandering infants and others exhibit concern for that next most important commodity, the family possession of bags and boxes; or, to use another metaphor, the hall is a turbulent pool where people pass and re-pass, eddy in little vortices, and are borne about as on currents which pour in from all sides like tributary brooks in flood. Lost tickets, hurried canteen purchases, vehement debates as to supposed destinations—these are spontaneous and local disturbances within the welter of the whole."[11]

Immigrants aboard the Canadian Pacific Monarch, 1925.
Canadian Pacific Limited, 1833b.

In 1910, the United States Immigration Service also began operating in Halifax, first out of Pier 2 and later Pier 21, since some ocean liners not allowed into American ports nevertheless carried passengers destined for the United States. Moreover, some liner passengers bound for Chicago landed in Halifax rather than New York because the fare was cheaper by a dollar. These passengers were processed in Halifax before boarding trains to their destinations in the United States.[12]

During the early peak periods of Pier 21, when up to a thousand people arrived at once and were processed in groups of 250, as many as 10 immigration officers were needed to examine incoming passengers. Two more would be busy with settlement and placement or counselling. Two others would be stationed aboard the ship, and at least eight guards would be stationed around the facilities.

The Great Depression of the 1930s changed all of this, as immigration and ocean traffic dwindled. Several steamship lines lowered their rates in an attempt to attract transatlantic customers. During this decade, there were many more departures

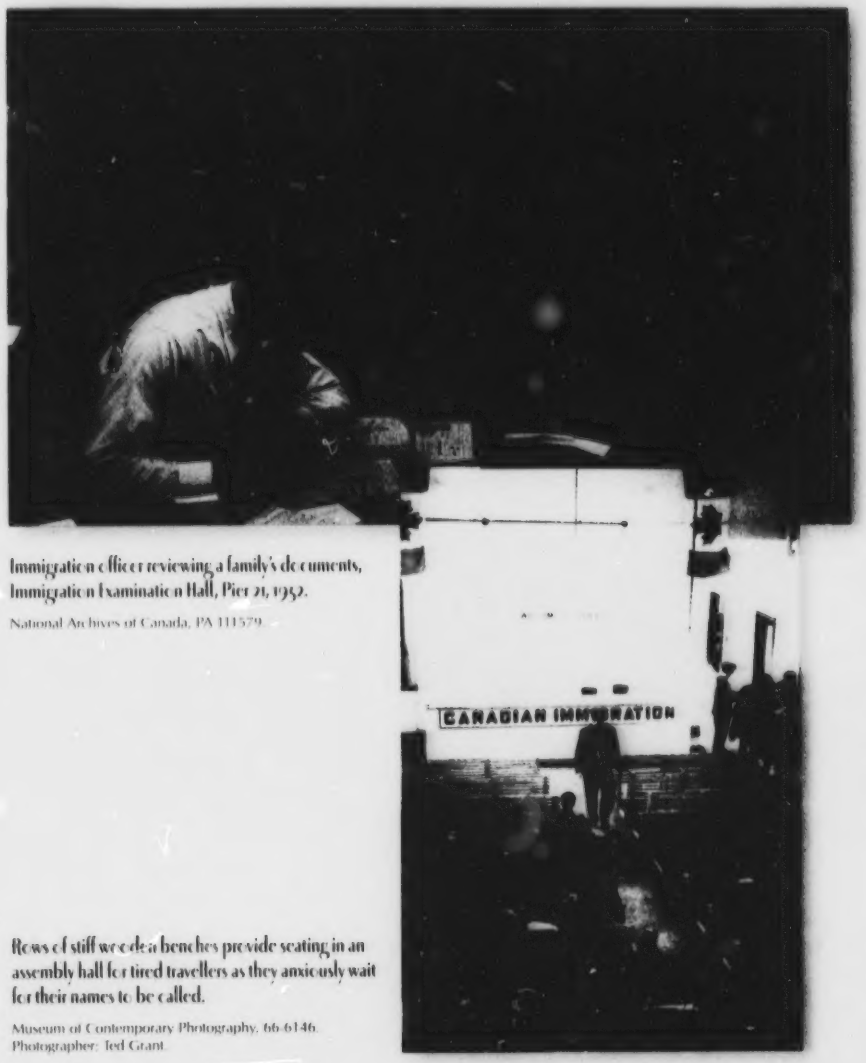
11. Sarah Ommundsen Mita and J.F. LeBlanc, *Pier 21: The Gateway That Changed Canada* (Hantsport, N.S.: Lancelot Press, 1988), 51–52.

12. Ommundsen Mita and LeBlanc, 67.

from Pier 21 than there were arrivals. Immigrants who had come to Canada in better years decided to return home, while others were deported. In sharp contrast to earlier times, when excitement and hope were in the air, many unhappy and bitter people filed through the doors of Pier 21.

Canada declared war against Germany on September 10, 1939. The first war victims arrived at Pier 21 later that month on the *City of Flint,* having survived a torpedo attack on the British passenger liner *Athenia* off the coast of Ireland. After being attended to by scores of Red Cross doctors and nurses, they boarded a 16-car rescue train. Only one car was needed for baggage since most of the passengers had lost all their possessions.

Pier 21 played a key role in the unfolding wartime drama. Troops slipped out quietly almost every day, many on passenger liners that had been hurriedly refitted to take sailors, soldiers and airmen overseas. Of the estimated 368,000 Canadian troops destined for the European front, all but two small army groups sailed from Halifax. A total of 58,820 armed forces personnel aboard 37 ships sailed for the war from Pier 21 between August and

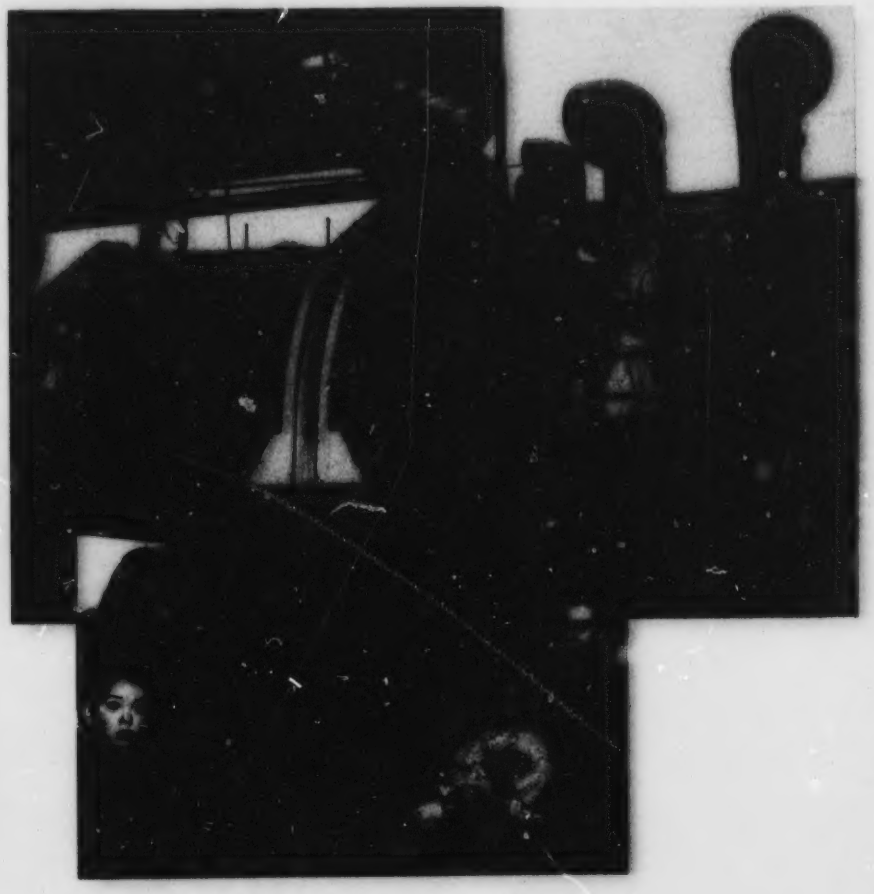


Immigration officer reviewing a family's documents, Immigration Examination Hall, Pier 21, 1952.

National Archives of Canada, PA 111579

Rows of stiff wooden benches provide seating in an assembly hall for tired travellers as they anxiously wait for their names to be called.

Museum of Contemporary Photography, 86-6146. Photographer: Ted Grant.



British war brides and their children on their journey to a new life in Canada, April 1946.

National Archives of Canada, C-113,008 and Canadian National Railways, CNR-113.

December 1942. Sailors who had survived torpedo attacks, prisoners of war, wartime evacuees (including 3,000 guest children from Britain) and others ended up at Pier 21. It was also where many Canadian servicemen, some wounded or disabled, disembarked on their return from the war.

Pier 21 officially reopened for immigration in 1947 and was immediately faced with the challenge of processing floods of war brides, who came chiefly from England, Scotland and Wales. It is estimated that Pier 21 processed 48,000 war brides and their 22,000 children. Many of the brides arrived on the *Aquitania* from Southampton and the *Franconia* from Liverpool.[13] (The wheel of the *Aquitania* is preserved on Citadel Hill in Halifax in recognition of the role the ship played in Canadian history.)

In addition to war brides, half a million other newcomers, including many displaced persons and refugees, were processed at Pier 21 in the years following the Second World War. Canada's leading role in welcoming immigrants is described from the point of view of the Pier workers:

13. Dziewanowska Malic and LeBlanc, 83.

"To observers at Halifax, from the day in April 1947 when *S.S. Aquitania* drew into dock carrying a pioneer contingent, it was obvious that Canada had opened the door well in advance of the United States and other western countries . . . the obstacles to resettlement early in 1948 in the States were such that even the immensely powerful philanthropic societies there, while active in Europe in the distribution of relief, could not defeat the exclusive laws of their own country and make it a haven for all their protégés . . .

"Neither could the rescue be left to other possibilities of resettlement. Australian passages, for example, did not begin in a substantial way until 1949, and until, some months later, chartered vessels used for immigrants on the outward voyage brought back Dutch troops from Indonesia. South America rivalled in an early start in refugee reception, but the ocean travel required twice the time, and other conditions operated to slow down the movement there.

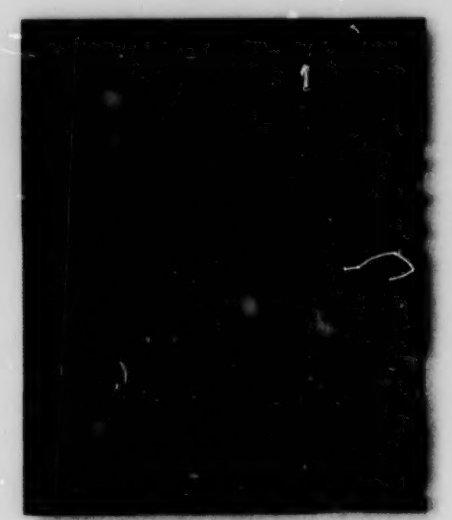
"The United Kingdom had played its part already, the settlement in Britain of much of the Polish army had taken place. In 1947 the British nation was itself facing an economic crisis, yet undertook the 'Balt Cygnet' and 'Westward Ho' operations, whereby eighty-four thousand were received. Nevertheless, when vessels first became available in 1946 after the return of the fighting men, the short haul of six days across the Atlantic to Halifax helped to give to Canada a natural lead over all other countries.

"Thus it was that, as the clouds of hardship deepened over central Europe in 1947, a narrow but distinct band of brightness showed for the homeless people over the north-western horizon where Canada lay awaiting its new inhabitants."[14]

The postwar period brought waves of immigrants, notably the Dutch, the Italians, and the Baltic refugees of 1948–1950, including almost 1,700 Estonians who journeyed to Canada on ships that were frequently unseaworthy and without proper shelter for passengers. The Estonians arrived—often landing at Pier 21—on the *Walnut* and the *Sarabande*, both converted trawlers; the *Parnu*, which had been a minesweeper; and the *Gladstone*, a rickety old fishing schooner.

These voyages attracted a lot of attention. Among those chronicled by the press was one undertaken by at least 20 Baltic refugees who had fled to Sweden early in the war and who had arrived in Canada in 1949 on the *Amanda*, a covered fishing boat that was also the smallest ship to successfully cross the Atlantic.

14. Duivenvoorden Mitic and LeBlanc, 78–79.



Ausma Levalds from Latvia is proclaimed the 50,000th displaced person to enter Canada.

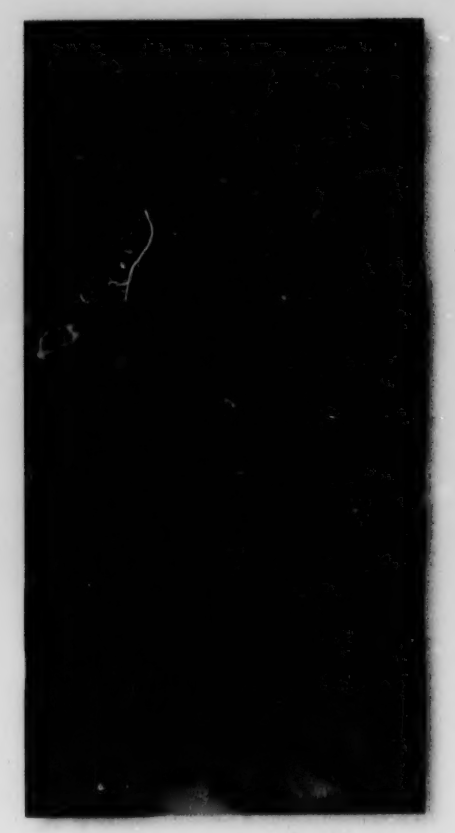
Pier 21 Society, 002.

In February 1949, it was reported in the *Halifax Mail Star* that Canada had just received its 50,000th displaced person. The person chosen for this honour was Ausma Levalds, who was given a doll and a locket by Halifax Mayor J.E. Ahern. The paper reported:

"Eight-year-old Ausma Levalds got the biggest reception of her life this morning when she arrived in the Port of Halifax on the *Samaria*—the 50,000th displaced person to come to Canada under the International Refugee Organization plan.

"The slight blonde Latvian girl was greeted in the Immigration centre by the flash and pop of camera flash bulbs, by swarming reporters and radio men, and her arrival was covered by newsreel men.

"Ausma was one of the 1,200 displaced persons from Cuxhaven to come ashore in Halifax en route to new homes in Canada. Accompanied by her mother Karline and sister Rasma, the little D.P. is en route to join her father, a farmer's helper in New Hamburg, Ontario. Their home in Latvia was the countryside of Liepaja."[15]



Officer H.J. Iex greeting newcomers on board the *Ragnehorg*, August 1955.

Canadian Immigration Historical Society, McFaul Collection.

15. "50,000th Displaced Person for Canada Given Welcome," *The Halifax Mail Star*, February 23, 1949.

Pier 21: The Place Where We Became Canadians

By Peter C. Newman

Peter C. Newman.
Photographer: Peter Bregg, *Maclean's*.

"We build and preserve too few monuments to our past, but in Nova Scotia a group of historically minded citizens is organizing a national fundraising drive to resurrect a derelict pier on the Halifax waterfront. Led by the doughty and energetic Ruth Goldbloom, the project will cost $9 million, with half the funds already pledged by Ottawa, the province and the city.

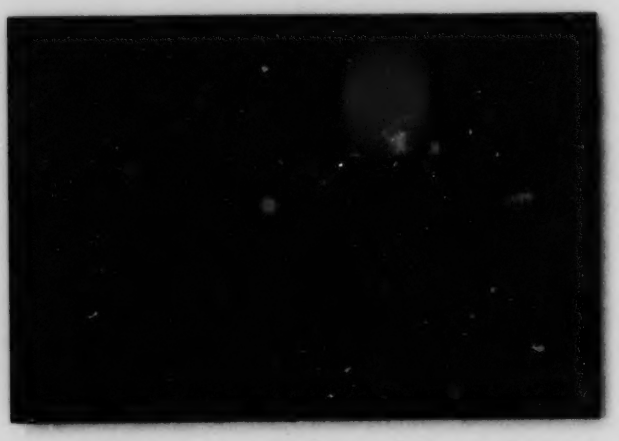
"Rebuilding a rickety harbor shed doesn't sound all that exciting. But it's an eminently worthwhile project because Pier 21 was for 43 years (1928–1971) the main gateway to Canada. For more than 1.5 million immigrants, including wartime refugees, children evacuated from the British blitz, 50,000 war brides, and the thousands of postwar arrivals, the oblong structure symbolized the start of a new life.

"We have virtually no monuments to the multicultural nature of Canada, to salute those who came here seeking a fresh and better future—which, when you think about it, includes just about all Canadians. We're a nation of boat people.

"Because the newcomers spent only a morning or afternoon being processed inside the building, before being loaded aboard trains that distributed them across the country, most memories of Pier 21 are vague. But the experience of arriving in Canada—which then, and now, is a land that most of the world's refugees and immigrants dream of—remains unforgettable.

"I know. I arrived at Pier 21 in the late summer of 1940, a frightened 10-year-old, escaping with my family from the Nazi occupations of Austria and Czechoslovakia, where we had lived. We arrived aboard the *Nova Scotia*, a small converted cruise ship that had sailed from Liverpool in a convoy that German U-boats attacked twice on the way across the Atlantic.

"For most of 18 months, we had been on the run, finally retreating to Bordeaux in southwest France, where we were machine-gunned by Luftwaffe Junkers. This was pretty scary for a 10-year-old whose fantasies were entirely caught up by the prospects of immigrating to the New World. By promising to buy a farm through the CPR, my father had obtained a Canadian visa. That was a rare document because at the time hardly anyone was being allowed in, especially Jews, reflecting the sentiment of the anonymous Ottawa immigration official who, when asked how many Jewish immigrants Canada should admit, flatly decreed: 'None is too many.'



New arrivals aboard the *Argentina* awaiting clearance in the Immigration Examination Hall, Pier 21, March 1952.

National Archives of Canada, PA 152023.

"While I dreamt about being a Mountie or a naval captain, the only Canadian images I had encountered, my parents worried about the weather. Since we were bound for Canada, 'the land of eternal snow,' as we imagined, my mother had hurriedly bought fur coats (made out of rough-haired and slightly pungent British rabbits) for our arrival, even though it was early September. We nearly fried in our getups.

"I remember the moment I first sighted Nova Scotia from the ship's bow, surprised that the trees were green and the soil was brown, since in the few newsreels I had seen of Canada, the land—like the film—had been black and white. I don't recall the outside of Pier 21, but I vividly recall what happened inside. Instead of being welcomed to our new home, we were tagged—like surplus merchandise at an Eaton's bargain basement sale—and herded into large cages. In retrospect, this all made good sense. The tags identified our nationalities, dates of arrival, destinations, and so on. The cages were there so that immigration officers could deal with us as groups, particularly where language was concerned.

"The moment of greeting the New World—*our* new world—had been tinted by the kind of bureaucratic regimentation we had been trying to escape. It's not easy for Canadians born here to comprehend how deeply immigrants feel about arriving in this country. At that magic moment, you realize that whatever happens, nothing will be the same again. The exhilaration is inevitably tinged with fear of the unknown and the anticipated loneliness of having left behind friends and family. But expectations are so high—especially for refugees like us, since we were fleeing the chill of guns—that the impact of anything that disturbs the pure joy of arrival is magnified a thousandfold.

"We were lucky. Our papers were in order and an avuncular immigration inspector waved us into the Pier's Annex, where we were welcomed by volunteers from the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society. I was handed a Fig Newton. Nothing has tasted better since. Before climbing aboard one of the Canadian National immigrant trains, we decided to celebrate at the coffee shop of the nearby Nova Scotian Hotel. When I had to visit the bathroom, I was confronted by a pay toilet—you put a nickel in the slot before the door would open. I didn't have

Visitors relax aboard Pier 21's recreated train, enjoying sights, sounds and motions that make them feel as if they were setting off on a journey across the country.

Pier 21 Society.

a nickel and didn't know the language well enough to ask for help. Luckily the door was high enough off the floor that I was able to slide under it.

"As soon as I did, I realized that if caught, I would immediately be deported and, in fact, haven't publicly confessed my sinful ways until now, 56 years and ten months later. But I was never caught and believe the statute of limitations is now firmly in effect.

"Wisely, the plan to restore Pier 21 includes more than architecture. The exhibits will be interactive so that visitors can recreate not just its images but, through computers, the *feeling* of being quizzed by the officials and admitted to the promised land. Supporting the fund-raising campaign are, among many others, such Establishment heavyweights as Bill Mingo, Peter Bronfman, Martin Connell, John Evans, Trevor Eyton and Dr. Joseph Wong.

"I'm delighted that Ruth Goldbloom and her volunteers are restoring Pier 21. But no pay toilets. Please."[16]

Reprinted courtesy of Peter C. Newman and *Maclean's*.

16. Peter C. Newman, "Pier 21: The Place Where We Became Canadians," *Maclean's*, (July 22, 1996): 56.

The *Berlin* departing from Pier 21, Halifax, 1957.
National Archives of Canada, PA 187858.

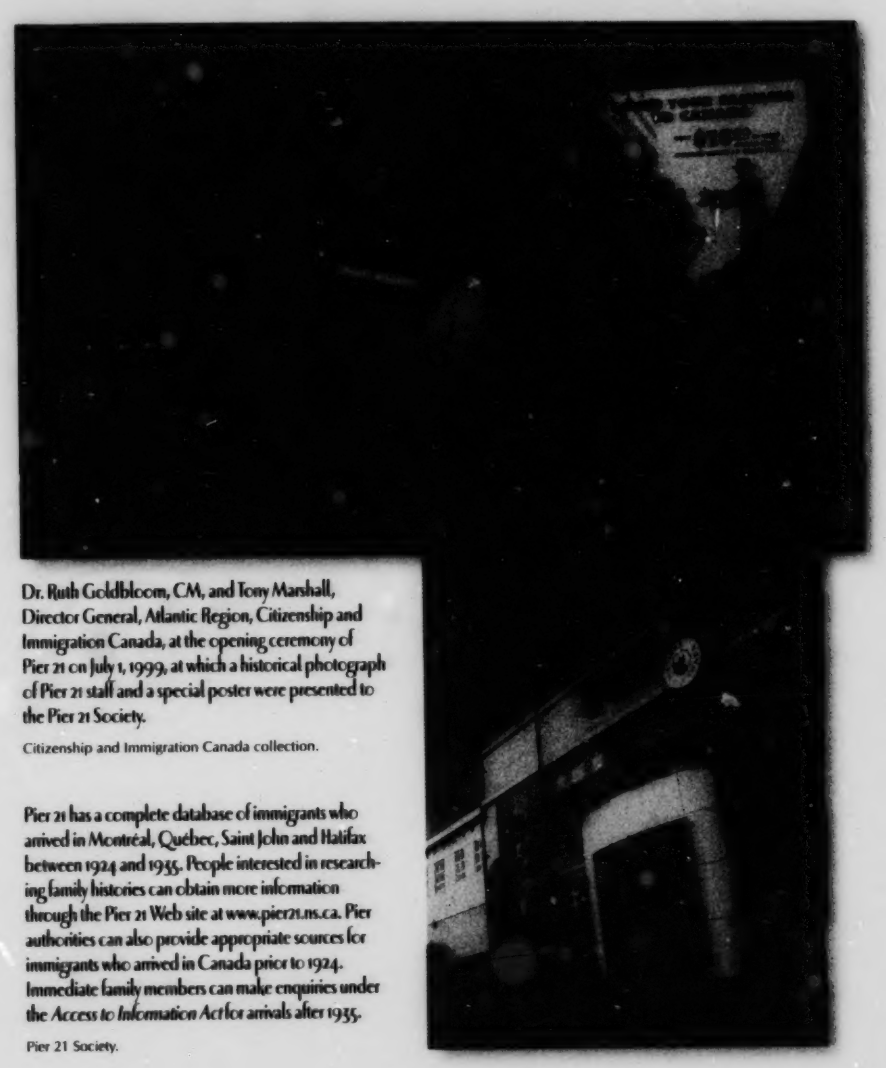
The 1950s were the heyday of Pier 21. In 1951 alone, more than 93,000 people landed at Pier 21. Workers recall that on one particular day in the mid-1950s, five ocean liners arrived and more than 3,800 passengers were processed. The decade was also the era of luxury liners, such as the *Queen Elizabeth*. Consequently, although many immigrants ate bagged meals off their laps while travelling by ship, others enjoyed lavish feasts spread over fine linen tablecloths.

At the close of the 1950s, there were signs that the end of an era was approaching. As the age of the ocean liner began to fade, that of the jetliner was just beginning. At the same time as Canada's international airports were installing reception and processing facilities to cope with increasing volumes of immigrants arriving by air, Pier 21's clientele was declining in numbers, and the facility was showing signs of old age. There was still one more decade of Canadian history to be played out at Pier 21, but in the early 1960s, as more and more travellers were attracted by the speed of air travel, ships began to arrive half empty. In December 1967, newspapers reported that the Cunard liner *Carinthia* was paying her last visit. The *Carinthia*, which in the golden days of ocean liner travel usually carried 800 passengers on a crossing to Halifax, had only 240 aboard on her last transatlantic voyage. The large reception hall seemed ominously empty. By 1970, the federal Department of Manpower and Immigration could not justify the expense of a facility that was really no longer needed. And so, at the end of March 1971, the Immigration service officially left Pier 21. This was a very difficult time

for the people who had spent their entire working lives at the Pier. According to one of them,

". . . with the closing of Pier 21 a chapter of Canadian life was finished. Gone, apparently forever, was the excitement, the challenge, the exhilaration, of dealing with hundreds or even thousands of immigrants at once—people who had travelled for a week or more to reach Canada and who still had a train journey of days before them; people receiving their first impression of a vast, new country; people with special needs and unique problems; people who at Pier 21 were for almost 50 years met, examined, fed, nursed, sometimes housed, assisted with loans, married, even occasionally buried. Pier 21 was in many ways a bustling self-sufficient village hidden within the vast anonymous-looking transit shed and the people who worked there will never forget it."[17]

17. Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, 48–49.



Dr. Ruth Goldbloom, CM, and Tony Marshall, Director General, Atlantic Region, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, at the opening ceremony of Pier 21 on July 1, 1999, at which a historical photograph of Pier 21 staff and a special poster were presented to the Pier 21 Society.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada collection.

Pier 21 has a complete database of immigrants who arrived in Montréal, Québec, Saint John and Halifax between 1924 and 1935. People interested in researching family histories can obtain more information through the Pier 21 Web site at www.pier21.ns.ca. Pier authorities can also provide appropriate sources for immigrants who arrived in Canada prior to 1924. Immediate family members can make enquiries under the *Access to Information Act* for arrivals after 1935.

Pier 21 Society.

Dr. Ruth Goldbloom, CM.

Photographer: James Ingram.

Happily, Pier 21 reopened to the world on Canada Day 1999, but this time as a historic site. Ruth Goldbloom, President of the Pier 21 Society, which restored the pier, has said that the stories of the immigrants themselves were at the heart of the restoration. The new Pier 21 is not meant to be a museum but rather a place where visitors can relive the experiences of immigrants. The $9-million restoration, which preserved the original large areas and doors, was paid for by the federal government and the private sector, and includes a theatre and an exhibition hall.

CHAPTER 2

THE JETLINER REPLACES THE OCEAN LINER

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THE JETLINER REPLACES THE OCEAN LINER

The Evolution of Air Travel

Aviation has come a long way in less than a century; it is hard to remember that in its infancy, airports in Canada were not the busy runways and terminals serving millions that they are today. In fact, they were not airports at all; they were more likely to be frozen lakes or farmers' fields.

During the First World War, aircraft suddenly became much more than expensive amusements as they began to be mass-produced. And since the young men who flew them on the western front had a life expectancy of two weeks, many aircraft and flight-training facilities were needed.

Shortly after the war, John Alcock and Arthur Whitten Brown won the £10,000 prize offered by Lord Northcliffe, owner of the *London Daily Mail,* for successfully crossing the Atlantic Ocean. They began what turned out to be the first direct transatlantic flight from Lester's Field, Newfoundland, and landed in Clifden, Ireland, just under 16 hours and 30 minutes later. All transatlantic flights, successful and unsuccessful, started from Newfoundland and, as a result, helped to focus a great deal of interest on that point of land and its geographic position as the closest to Europe. Prior to this, British dirigibles had travelled between the United Kingdom and the United States, including the R-34 that crossed earlier than Alcock and Brown's flight.

The Civil Aviation Board, established in 1919 to oversee this new mode of travel, began to carry out the work of regulating air services. However, only years later did the technology that would allow aviation to play a role in Canada's development become available. One minister said he "did not think Canada would ever have need for an air service."[18] Developments in aviation that made possible the transportation of people were slow during the 1920s and 1930s, although some progress was made during that period.

18. J.R.K. Main, *Voyageurs of the Air: A History of Civil Aviation in Canada 1858–1967* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967), 28.

C.D. Howe, Minister of Transport, seen on the steps of a Trans-Canada Air Lines North Star, was particularly interested in establishing a strong Canadian presence in the growing field of aviation. Date unknown.

National Archives of Canada, C 085170.

In 1919, the Canadian Pacific Railway, which had been so active in moving people and goods by boat and rail, applied for legislation to extend its charter to include the operation of aircraft. By 1922, there were 36 airfields in Canada, seven of which belonged to the federal government while the others were used by local flying clubs and aircraft manufacturers. At the time, the government established and operated only airport sites required for its own use.

Meanwhile, other countries were seeing the potential for developing air transport facilities and systems. At the Imperial Conference of 1926 in London, England, it was agreed that the British Empire would be better linked by instituting a system of mammoth airships between England and its colonies. Prime Minister Mackenzie King promised the support of Canada through the construction of an airship base in eastern Canada. Saint-Hubert, near Montréal, was selected as the base, but only one airship landed there. This type of air service ended after an airship crashed in France. Saint-Hubert remained in operation as a national airport from 1927 to 1941. During the 1920s and 1930s, it played a key role in the development of the meteorological expertise that made transatlantic travel possible in the 1940s. In addition to serving as links in long-distance travel, Saint-Hubert and the new Rimouski airport were important in establishing a trial airmail service where mail was transferred to and from ocean liners travelling between England and Canada.

Aviation Developments in the 1920s and 1930s

During the 1920s and 1930s, the government turned its attention to the role aviation could play in developing the North. The result of the government's policy was the development throughout northern Canada, including remote areas, of commercial self-sustaining air services that did not require government assistance. In fact, during the 1920s and 1930s, Canada led the world in the transportation of air cargo, almost all destined for northern Canada.[19]

By the late 1920s, air transport was booming in the United States, both within its borders and in its commerce with other countries, including Canada. In contrast, intercity air services for either passengers or cargo were negligible in Canada. The fact that Canada had a rail system that served the population well and that the

19. J.T. (Jack) Dyment, "Adapting TCA Aircraft to Canadian Conditions," *The CAHS Journal* 24, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 7.

United States had a more fragmented system between population centres contributed to the acceleration of the airline industry south of the border. In the 1930s, trains such as the 484 travelled almost as fast as the early airplanes. However, during this period, Canadians began to envy the air services available to their southern neighbours.[20]

In the tough Depression years, the R.B. Bennett Conservative government did not consider progress in the aviation industry to be a priority, but it did put unemployed Canadians to work developing airports. The Liberal government that won the 1935 election promised it would proceed with a trans-Canada airline system. There was increasing awareness of the rapid international developments taking place and a real appetite for using the new technology to Canada's benefit and strengthening Canada's position in global transportation and trade.

The idea of routine transatlantic flights was not considered realistic by most people in the 1930s. Only a few dozen airplanes had made the trip and each crossing was still considered big news. Air travel was prohibitively expensive for many years, and the vast majority of the travelling public simply could not afford it. For example, in 1931, a one-way ticket from Winnipeg to Regina amounted to the princely sum of $18.50, while a one-way fare from Montréal to New York came to $33.40, and Moncton to Toronto, $88.25![21] High rates indeed for the times! As for travel across the Atlantic, the fares were exorbitant. In 1939, a one-way ticket across the Atlantic from North America to Marseilles was $375, or $675 return, the former equivalent to about $7,000 in 1996 Canadian dollars.[22]

Early Trans-Canada Air Lines waiting room.

City of Ottawa Archives, CA-4406.

20. See note 19.

21. Larry Milberry, *Air Transport in Canada* (Toronto: CANAV Books, 1997), 122.

22. Milberry, 145.

Transatlantic Commercial Flight

In 1937, Botwood, Newfoundland, became the base for commercial transatlantic flying boat services. The first successful commercial trip across the Atlantic occurred on July 5–6, 1937, when Captain Harold E. Gray left Botwood for Foynes, at the mouth of the Shannon River in Ireland, arriving 12 hours and 34 minutes later. Meanwhile, Captain A.S. Wilcockson took off from Foynes for Botwood, a trip that took 15 hours and 3 minutes.[23]

A.H. Sandwell recounts Captain Wilcockson's flight and the excitement it generated.

"After resting for two days at Botwood, Captain A.S. Wilcockson lifted 'Caledonia' from the water at 8:45 a.m. (EST) on Thursday, July 8th, and headed for Montreal, circling the city of Quebec and the liner 'Empress of Britain'—on which was Prime Minister Mackenzie King—en route. Elaborate, but rather last-minute, arrangements had been made for the reception of the aerial ambassador from overseas. Landing channels had been buoyed, mooring buoys had been laid down, a refuelling barge was at hand, ships in harbour were decorated, and soon after noon the crowds began to collect along the narrow highway two miles below Boucherville, on the South Shore of the St. Lawrence River . . .

"The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, with the co-operation of the Canadian Marconi Company, had installed an all-embracive system of communication, including a fast launch equipped with short-wave radio . . . the programme was released on a coast to coast network across Canada, to the NBC for broadcasting . . .

"The great flying boat appeared on the horizon at about 3:46 p.m., sailing though the heat-haze and heading straight up the river toward Montreal. As she reached the harbour, every vessel with any steam in its boilers squealed and trumpeted its welcome . . . after the cheers and hand-clapping had subsided, [Captain Wilcockson] was officially greeted by Hon. C.D. Howe, Minister of Transport, on behalf of the Federal Government; then by S.J. Hungerford, president of the Canadian National Railways . . .

"After signing a few hundred autographs, Captain Wilcockson and his fellow officers were hustled into a launch for a triumphal trip up the river, a visit to the City Hall and finally a dinner as the guests of Mr. Hungerford at the Royal Montreal Golf Club at Dixie.

"Soon after 1 p.m. on Friday, July 9th, 'Caledonia' took off on the last leg of its journey . . ."[24]

23. Milberry, 144.

24. A.H. Sandwell, "North Atlantic Rehearsal," *Canadian Aviation* 10, no. 7 (July 1937): 4, 12.

Airport Development and Ownership

Canada increasingly realized it could not afford to ignore the new form of fast travel and transport. In 1928, permission was given to begin the survey for a Canadian transcontinental airway. The 1930s saw many advances in civil aviation and airport construction, despite the economic hardships of the times. The completion of the Trans-Canada Airway, the establishment of the Department of Transport, and the creation of Trans-Canada Air Lines, which offered mail and passenger service, were the key events of this decade.

The Trans-Canada Airway was based on the municipal airports established across the country, many of which had arisen from the flying club movement. The government had introduced a very successful policy in 1927 that had a big impact on airport development. A local group provided a suitable aerodrome, hangars, an air engineer, an instructor and 30 people who wanted to learn to fly. In return, the government supplied two airplanes and gave $100 to each person who obtained a licence. As a result, the flying clubs developed a chain of airports in the main cities and had a significant impact on the training of pilots. By the end of 1929, 24 flying clubs were operating across the country.

The government's role was to provide intermediate airports between the major municipal airports, as well as other aviation supports, such as radio and weather services and lights for night flying. During the Depression, work crews were marshalled under the Bennett government to develop airstrips and airports across the country. These unemployment relief projects made possible the development of 43 sites in 1934 and 1935. The crews who did this valuable work were called the "Royal Twenty Centers" since they received 20 cents a day for their labour. As Canada struggled out of the Depression, and in the following years, airports underwent further improvements with the addition of lights, paved runways and larger terminals. This was the beginning of large-scale intervention by the government in commercial civil aviation and an even more active role in the development of airports.

First consignment of airmail flown by Trans-Canada Air Lines from Toronto to Winnipeg, October 1939.
National Archives of Canada, PA 112026.

The new federal Department of Transport, established in 1936, counted air services among its responsibilities. With this new authority to oversee air services and the creation of Trans-Canada Air Lines, all the elements were in place for Canada to make full use of aviation technology.

Loading a Trans-Canada Air Lines Lockheed, Winnipeg, 1938.

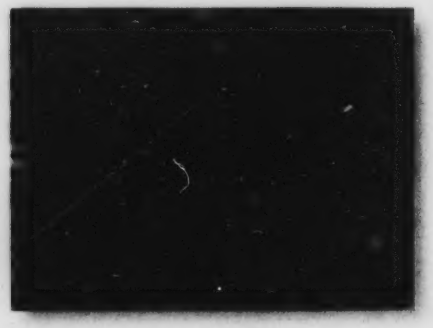
Air Canada Archives.

DC-3 over Québec City, 1946.

Air Canada Archives.

A Trans-Canada Air Lines Douglas DC-3 at Uplands Airport, Ottawa, 1948.

Canada Aviation Museum, Ottawa, 5568.



Montréal's Dorval Airport was adapting to commercial traffic in the late 1940s. During the Second World War, the terminal building was the centre for Ferry Command and the Canadian Government Trans-Atlantic Air Service.

Air Canada Archives.

Originally named after Fred McCall, a local barnstormer, Calgary Airport welcomed the first Trans-Canada Air Lines DC-8 in 1962.

Air Canada Archives.

When the Second World War started, the government took over certain municipal airports under lease to support the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP). During the war, 25 of Canada's flying clubs took part in the BCATP and operated 22 elementary flying training schools, which trained more than 41,000 pilots for Canadian, British and Commonwealth air forces.[25] Two hundred airports were constructed largely because of the Plan and thousands of young men were recruited and trained as flight crews to support the war effort. After the war, some municipalities took back their airports, although others chose to fold their operations. Nevertheless, it was thought that the more airports there were, the greater the demand would be for aircraft, leading to more employment in aircraft manufacture and maintenance.

Many airports had been built by local governments that, even with funding from other levels of government, couldn't finance the airport infrastructure required to handle the bigger planes and the increases in cargo and passengers. Consequently, in the decades that followed, the federal government took over more and more airports.

Trans-Canada Air Lines and Canadian Pacific Airways

Rapid international developments in the field of aviation, international obligations to provide air linkages and the need to develop Canadian interests prompted the federal government to establish Trans-Canada Air Lines (TCA) in 1937 (its name was changed to Air Canada in 1965). The government's position was that only one Canadian airline company should service the international market and that it should be owned by the government.

When challenged on this by Opposition Leader R.B. Bennett, the new Minister of Transport, C.D. Howe, replied: "I think most of us are aware of the necessity of such a service. Canada is perhaps one of the few countries in the world without a national scheduled air service . . . we are woefully behind other countries in air services between centres of population . . . During the calendar year 1936 over 1,000,000 people travelled in scheduled air flights in the United States . . . Air

25. T.M. McGrath, *History of Canadian Airports* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1992), 16–17.

mail stamps are sold in Canada and much of our mail is routed across the border, transported by air services in the United States, then brought back across the border . . . The volume of this air mail is sufficient to warrant the establishment of a direct service in Canada."[26]

The Canadian government went on to establish a transatlantic service to support the war effort. Canadian Pacific established the Ferry Command Department, with Saint-Hubert as the main base of operations. Its aim was to deliver aircraft for the overseas forces, and to transport mail, equipment, and priority military and government personnel, in addition to looking after the training of pilots and crew for transatlantic flights—work subsequently taken over by the Royal Air Force in 1941.

Although the aircraft were owned by the Canadian government, they were operated by Trans-Canada Air Lines on a non-commercial basis for the duration of the war. The inaugural TCA flight took off on July 22, 1943, and carried Armed Forces personnel and a large volume of mail.[27]

A Trans-Canada Air Lines aircraft being loaded with mail at Malton Airport, near Toronto, 1945.

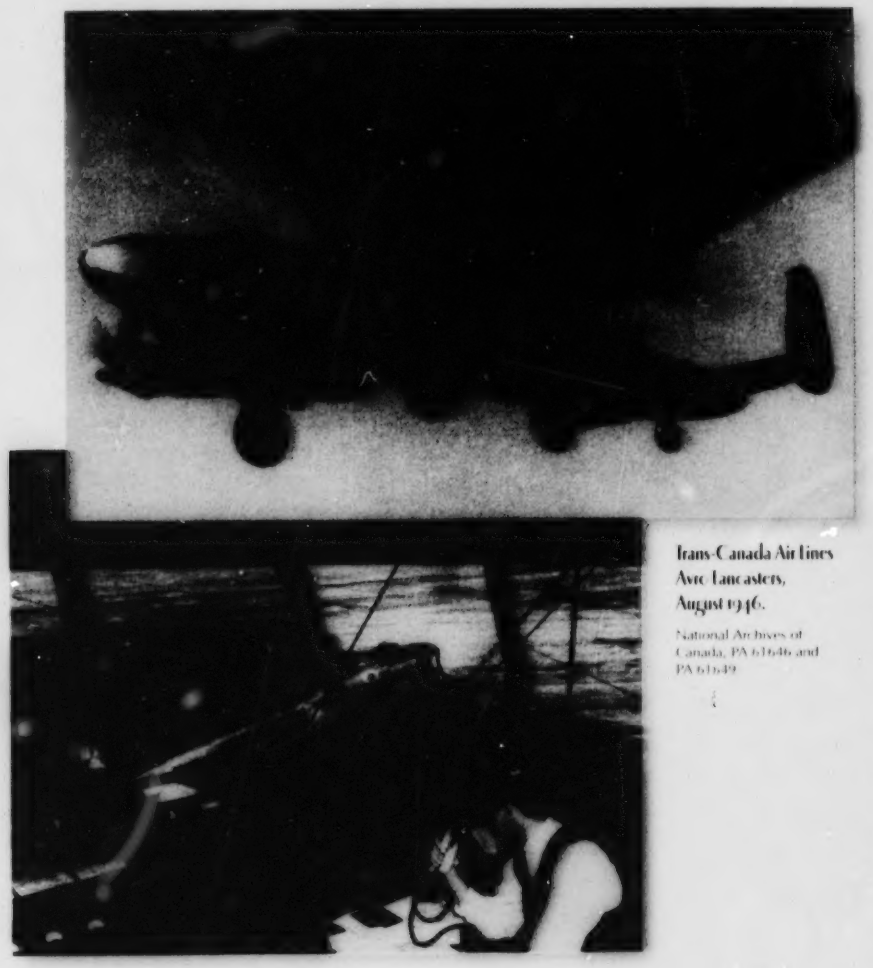
Air Canada Archives.

Captain G.W. McLaren, pilot for the first regular Trans-Canada Air Lines transatlantic service, April 15, 1947.

Air Canada Archives.

26. Milberry, 138.

27. David MacKenzie, *Canada and International Civil Aviation: 1932–1948* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 91.



Trans-Canada Air Lines Avro Lancasters, August 1946.

National Archives of Canada, PA 61646 and PA 61649

The wartime support effort had proven that transatlantic flights were possible and it set the stage for increased use of air transport in the years that followed.

From 1943 on, air service grew considerably and by 1947, Canada and TCA had a full commercial transatlantic air service.[28] In one month alone—April 1946—Trans-Canada Air Lines reported that it had carried 344 passengers in its 10-seat Lancasters. In September, it extended its service to London, using the recently opened Heathrow Airport. By the end of the year, TCA had made 600 Atlantic crossings, carrying 5,021 passengers.

As the frequency of flights increased and more people learned about air travel, the number of passengers climbed steadily. A significant change occurred when the 36-seat North Stars were put into service in May 1947, as their passenger capacity was 3.6 times that of the Lancasters. In June 1947, the frequency of the weekly transatlantic flights rose to nine. Westbound flights from Europe and the British Isles flew at capacity because of the postwar wave of immigration.[29] In an

28. MacKenzie, 92.

29. Milberry, 226.

Comfort was not the order of the day during early flights. Passengers were often given cotton batting, chewing gum and a cup. The cotton was to protect their ears against the noise, the gum was to help with air pressure and the cup was for queasy stomachs. North Star, late 1940s.

Air Canada Archives.

agreement with the Province of Ontario, TCA began moving thousands of immigrants to Canada, work that was initially sub-chartered to Trans-Ocean Airlines of the United States. In July 1947, a record was set when TCA carried 2,788 passengers. That year, it made 900 crossings, carrying a total of 15,815 passengers.[30]

"Early transatlantic flight was an adventure at the best of times, but luckily these first flights went off without difficulty. One of the earliest Pan Am passengers was a young Canadian official, Lester Pearson, who was returning to England only a few days before the outbreak of war. In his memoirs he recalled the experience. 'Only once did I doubt my good sense in rushing back by air. We had had to come down at Shediac, New Brunswick, because of engine trouble. When we took off again we ran into a fierce North Atlantic storm. I was in an upper berth in the plane, and feeling very miserable for I was then as prone to air-sickness as to sea-sickness. I looked out of a small oval window into the black night and found that we were flying only a few hundred feet above the wild waves. I hoped the engine had been well and truly repaired and I said to myself, "What the devil are you doing here?"'"[31]

30. See note 29.

31. MacKenzie, 72–73.

Wendy Traviss-Paul, a Purser with Air Canada and a former member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Aviation Historical Society, describes some of the early challenges faced by TCA cabin personnel in this article published in 1986.

"When the word pioneer is mentioned, thoughts usually turn to men in fur hats driving Red River carts or building log cabins. But, in the 1930s, a new breed of pioneer was emerging: the mode of transport was no longer the wagon and the cabin in question was that of a Lockheed airliner. As for the men in fur hats, they were now beautiful nurses in smart navy uniforms—Canada's first stewardesses with Trans-Canada Airlines.

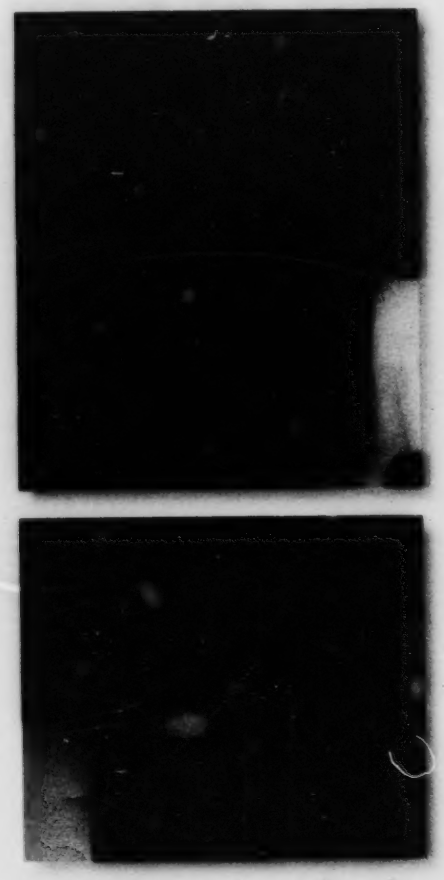
". . . While increases in schedules, the advent of jet aircraft, and competitive in-flight services have drastically changed the job, the romance and mystique associated with the early days still linger in the minds of many passengers.

"With the introduction of passenger aircraft, TCA had to hire cabin personnel; since a great deal of anxiety and airsickness was associated with air travel, nurses were a logical group from which to draw. Standard requirements: five feet to five feet five; 95 to 125 pounds; unmarried and a Canadian citizen who didn't wear glasses. TCA looked for practical and poised women who were cheerful, tactful and abreast of the daily news. A reporter of the day summed it up well: 'Girls seeking to become stewardesses must combine the comeliness of Venus with the capabilities of Florence Nightingale.'

". . . 1945 saw the start of trans-Atlantic flights, which brought the stewardess more work and less responsibility; they were joined by pursers who would oversee the flight and the aircraft were fitted with full hot meal galleys. Since schedules were irregular, lengthy stop-overs in Europe and the Caribbean were common while the crew awaited the next inbound aircraft. As equipment improved, meal service became more elaborate—full bar service was introduced on overseas flights in 1945 and domestically with the arrival of the DC-8L in 1966. When the 747 joined the fleet, so did in-flight movies. Now there was more to entertain the passengers than talking with the stewardess, and thank goodness. With the new services there was no time to talk!

". . . Thanks to those amazing ladies of TCA, there is still a strong camaraderie, a sense of family if you will, among crews today . . . Thanks to those wonderful pioneers of aviation, we are able to be part of an era which would never have come about without their determination and ideas. Bravo to the 'Nightingales of TCA'!"[32]

32. Wendy Traviss, "On the Wings of a Nightingale: TCA's Flying Ladies," *The CAHS Journal* 24, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 23, 33.



Pursers and stewardesses provide an array of services for the rapidly expanding travelling public, 1945.

Air Canada Archives.

In 1930, the CNR and CPR joined Western Canada Airways to form Canadian Airways Limited. Many observers of Canadian aviation developments had believed that this privately owned company would assume the role of the national airline as it was the stablest and largest airline in the country. This did not happen. However, despite experiencing difficult times during the Depression, the company carved its own niche in the fast-burgeoning air services field and in 1940 and 1941, by which time it was called Canadian Pacific Airways, the company purchased 10 aviation companies, including Yukon Southern Transport.

Initially, these companies continued to function much as they had before, even retaining their own names, but gradually, services were coordinated and in 1942, the newly named Canadian Pacific Air Lines commenced operation. Toward the end of the decade, the company was authorized to service the Pacific market as the government-owned TCA did not have sufficient resources to expand in this area. There was concern that Canada would lose ground to American and British companies if it did not move quickly. The government thus began to show more flexibility by allowing private airlines to play a role.

Grant McConachie, President of Canadian Pacific Air Lines, was ever enthusiastic about how air travel had brought people together from all over the world. "Just think of it!" he would say, breaking into a big grin and spreading his arms wide. "If Magellan's world could be compared to a watermelon, it took three hundred years and steam power to shrink it to the size of an apple. But in half a century the airplane has shrivelled it to the size of a pea, and in another fifty years will reduce it further to the size of a pinhead."[33]

By 1950, service to the United Kingdom, the Caribbean and the United States was well established, and other routes to Europe and South America were on the horizon. A booming economy made the cost of tickets more affordable. In the postwar years, the mode of travel was

33. Alison Gardner, *Grant McConachie*, The Canadians Series (Don Mills, Ont.: Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd., 1979), 60.

beginning to change, a direct result of the development of more powerful planes, the greater number of trained air crew, cabin pressurization, larger and better-equipped airports, increased technical support and, finally, the introduction of the jet engine. Travellers between Europe and North America were abandoning transatlantic steamers, no matter how comfortable they were, for the airlines. The postwar flood of immigrants to Canada had not abated, and business and holiday air travel was on the rise. There was a need for higher capacity aircraft that would go faster and farther and be economical at the same time.

The Comet could meet some of these requirements. It could undertake longer flights and travel at greater speeds, but its passenger capacity was still limited. The Canadair North Star of Trans-Canada Air Lines served well on the Atlantic until it was replaced in 1954 by the bigger, faster Super Constellation.[34] The advent of jet aircraft in the late 1950s further increased the speed and range of aircraft, but their passenger-carrying capacity did not appreciably change. With the introduction of the longer-range Boeing 747 in the 1970s, however, flights could now accommodate a much larger number of passengers and offer lower airfares, thereby enabling more people to take advantage of this kind of transportation.

The Growing Popularity of Air Travel

So it was, then, that in the mid-1960s the jet plane eclipsed the ocean liner as the preferred means of travel to Canada for everyone, including immigrants. In the 1950s, the percentage of immigrants arriving by air steadily climbed until it reached almost 40 percent by 1960.[35] In 1964, for the first time, more than half of all newcomers arrived by air,[36] and by 1973, airplanes were the mode of travel for over 85 percent of all immigrants.[37]

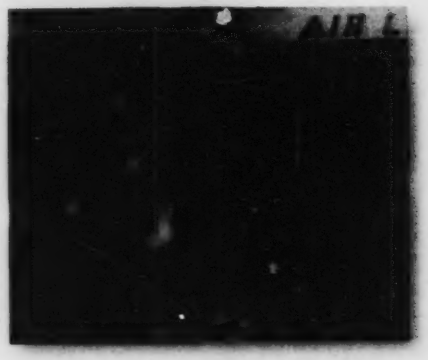
Although immigrants with skills needed by Canada continued to arrive, the Government of Canada was in the

34. Milberry, 733.

35. Department of Citizenship and Immigration, *1960 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Department of Citizenship and Immigration, 1961), n.p.

36. Department of Citizenship and Immigration, *1964 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1965), n.p.

37. Manpower and Immigration, *1973 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975), 2.



Immigrants arriving from Prestwick, Scotland, being welcomed by James A. MacKinnon, Acting Minister of Mines and Resources, at Montréal's Dorval Airport, June 1948.

National Archives of Canada, C 49401.

Canadian Pacific Archives, A-6671

Super Constellation, with a North Star and two DC-3s, Vancouver Airport, 1954.

Air Canada Archives.

Noel Marples, his wife Sheila and their nine children arriving in Vancouver, from England, c. 1958.

National Archives of Canada, C-045085.

The Lockheed Super Constellation—a giant in its day—was used by Trans-Canada Air Lines on long-distance routes. Wing tip fuel tanks were added to increase the aircraft's range on North Atlantic routes. Depending on seating arrangements, the Super "Connies" carried from 65 to 75 passengers from 1954 to 1962.

Air Canada Archives.

Transatlantic service from Toronto on the Super Constellation was launched with great fanfare in May 1954.

Air Canada Archives.

Gander International Airport in Newfoundland, an important link in transatlantic travel, August 1949.
Canada Aviation Museum, Ottawa, 5512.

process of changing its policies, and an increasing number of refugees and displaced persons also came to this country. Since they had few possessions to transport and since air travel was available from an increasing number of countries, refugees came to Canada by air, sometimes aboard armed forces aircraft as a result of humanitarian initiatives.

Airports evolved in step with the growing popularity of air travel. Although they were once places where families would drive on lazy Sunday afternoons to picnic in grassy fields alongside an airstrip and to view the marvels of aviation technology, for many, the novelty has worn off. The miracle of flight and flight technology is now taken for granted, and all the drama occurs inside the terminals. Passengers laden with numerous heavy bags spill out of cabs and rush toward the check-in counters. The arrivals area is crowded and noisy as families and friends are reunited. Immigration officials sort out passports, and people assigned to airport reception and the resettlement of immigrants and refugees are busy making arrangements for transportation and accommodations.

The rapid growth of TCA from its birth in 1937, the emergence of strong leadership in aviation development and the tremendous expansion of Canadian aviation as a whole during the war led to a marked increase in the popularity of air transport, both international and domestic. The availability of airline services from different parts of the emerging global village and changes in immigration and refugee policies would make possible the arrival of newcomers to Canada from a greater number of countries.

Developing Airlift Expertise

"The refugee is the everyman of our time."[38]

It was not until many years after the development of passenger aircraft that the airplane came to play a humanitarian role on the international stage. Canada's first

38. Henry Kreisel, as quoted in John Robert Colombo, *Concise Canadian Quotations* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1976), 170.

Hungarian refugees disembarking from a Maritime Central Airways Douglas DC-4 in Montréal, 1956.
National Archives of Canada, PA 125700.

large-scale experience with refugees occurred in 1956 when Russian tanks crushed a Hungarian uprising and 200,000 Hungarians fled their homeland. Although the number of Hungarian immigrants admitted to Canada was not large compared to the total number of immigrants in 1957—close to 40,000 Hungarians came to Canada in late 1956 and 1957—this experience with the Hungarians helped Canada's immigration authorities develop expertise in aviation movements that would prove valuable in future large-scale refugee efforts.

When Hungarians were leaving their homeland in droves, Jack Pickersgill was Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in the Louis Saint-Laurent Liberal government. After learning that most of the Hungarians had fled to Austria, Pickersgill instructed officials at the Canadian immigration office in Vienna to give top priority to processing the applications of Hungarians.

Earl E. McCarthy, who had joined the Department in 1947 when he was discharged from the Royal Canadian Air Force, was Chief of Movement Control and Transportation for the Department in 1956. He recalls the day he became involved in the Hungarian refugee efforts. He was walking out of his office when a stately man who turned out to be the Deputy Minister approached him and asked, "How can we get these poor Hungarians who are streaming out of their country . . . to Canada as quickly as possible?" McCarthy replied, "Fly them over."[39]

By the end of November of that year, immigration procedures had been simplified expressly for Hungarians, and Ottawa announced free transportation by ship and plane for all Hungarians who met the admission criteria. When he was 84, Jack Pickersgill remembered this period in a speech he gave:

39. Earl E. McCarthy, "The Hungarian Refugee Movement: Transportation and Settlement in Canada," in *Breaking Ground: The 1956 Hungarian Refugee Movement to Canada*, Robert H. Keyserlingk, ed. (Toronto: York Lanes Press, 1993), 58.

"By November 23rd, I had already begun to realize that a great many who wanted to come to Canada were not moving because not enough transport was available. I arranged that day with TCA, now Air Canada, CP Air and the shipping companies to use all available space they had. I also organized every airline or charter carrier that I could find in North America into an airlift to bring as many refugees as wanted to come.

". . . On November 28 after I had seen the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance, we held a cabinet meeting at which I recommended we give free passage to all Hungarian refugees who applied to our Vienna office for emigration to Canada. This offer, I think, had never been made before for anyone. Mr. Harris asked me, when I had made the proposal, how much it was going to cost. I answered that I had no idea, but what difference did it make? He was a little shocked. After all, he was the Minister of Finance.

". . . I recently looked in Hansard (1956) at a presentation I had made later in the House. One thing was quite clear, I said: Per capita we spent more on the Hungarian refugee movement than any other country including the United States."[40]

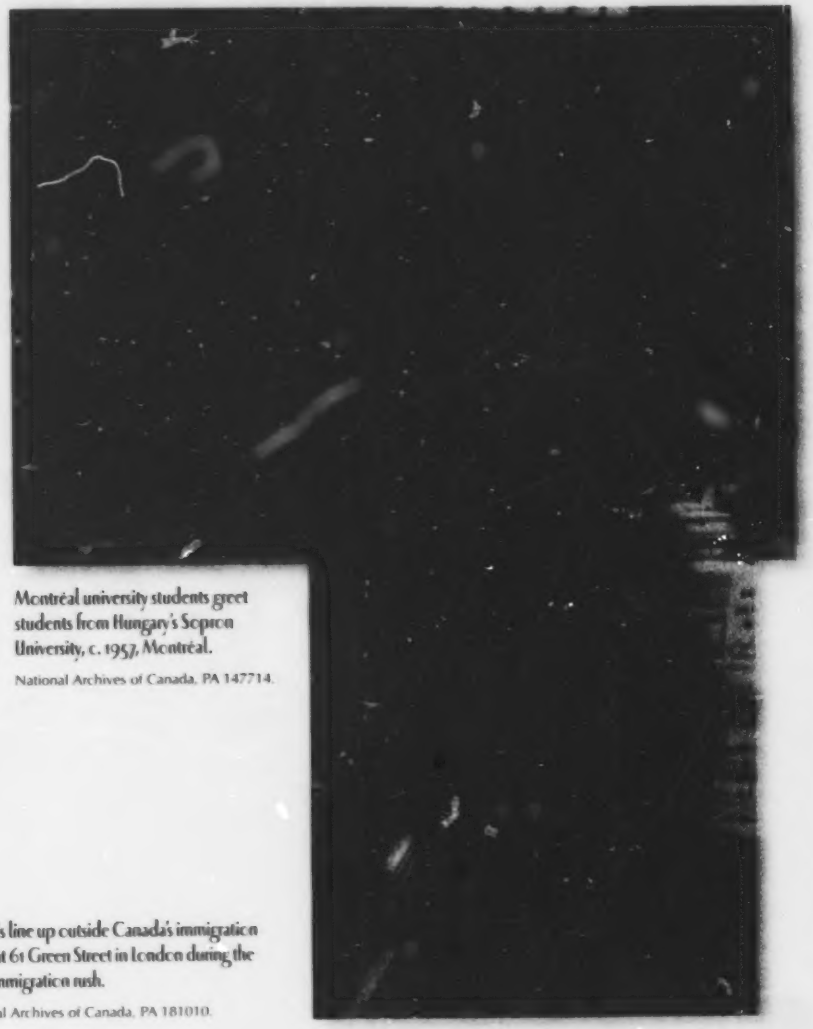
When word got out that the federal government was also contracting for flights through American airlines, Maritime Central Airways in Moncton, New Brunswick, and Wheeler Airlines in Montréal applied to assist in the effort. They were accepted and, almost overnight, dramatically expanded their fleets.

Steamship companies also agreed to bring in large groups, and it was not unusual to have several flights and ocean-going vessels arriving at the same time. Arranging transportation required constant consultation with the airlines, CPR, CNR and steamship companies.

Refugees arriving on the East Coast pursued their journey by train. Although the intention was for most of them to settle out West, in fact, about a third went there, a third to Ontario, and the others to Quebec and the Maritimes.

While the federal government was meeting the challenge of bringing thousands of Hungarians to Canada, it was also dealing with a much larger number of British immigrants who had been driven to emigrate when Egypt seized the internationally controlled Suez Canal. After talks failed, Britain, France and Israel secretly agreed to move against Egypt. The British-French bombing of Egypt in October 1956 resulted in panic in some

40. The Honourable J.W. Pickersgill, "The Minister and the Hungarian Refugees," in *Breaking Ground: The 1956 Hungarian Refugee Movement to Canada*, Robert H. Keyserlingk, ed. (Toronto: York Lanes Press, 1991), 48, 49.



Montréal university students greet students from Hungary's Sopron University, c. 1957, Montréal.

National Archives of Canada, PA 147714.

Crowds line up outside Canada's immigration office at 61 Green Street in London during the 1956 immigration rush.

National Archives of Canada, PA 181010.

parts of Britain. For other Britons, the bombings led to great disillusionment with the Eden government. Another factor in the mass immigration was the major economic recession of 1957, which prompted many to consider opportunities in other countries. As a result, more than 108,000 British people left for Canada. To cope with the huge influx of immigrants, the federal government launched an airlift program called the Air Bridge to Canada (ABC), which flew close to 20,000 Hungarian and British immigrants to Canada on more than 200 chartered flights in the opening months of 1957.

Nineteen-fifty-seven represented a watershed year in Canadian immigration history when approximately 282,000 immigrants came to Canada. The expertise acquired to meet the challenges posed by large-scale movements of people, such as the Hungarians and the British, served immigration authorities well in the following years and would prove invaluable when they had to deal with the influx of 12,000 Czechs following the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the airlifting of 4,420 Ugandan-Asians to Canada in October and November 1972. As recently

Ugandan-Asians boarding a plane at Entebbe Airport, Uganda, 1972.

Roger St. Vincent collection

as 1999, large-scale airlifts were again used to evacuate some 7,000 Kosovar refugees to Canada. The use of airplanes to move large numbers of people signalled the end of the heyday of the ocean liner and the dawning of a new era in transportation and immigration.

CHAPTER 3

TOWARD A NEW ERA:
A TRANSITION PERIOD IN TRANSPORTATION AND POLICY

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TOWARD A NEW ERA: A TRANSITION PERIOD IN TRANSPORTATION AND POLICY

The Postwar Era

During the postwar period when rapid advances were being made in the transportation sector, there were several related landmark events in the evolution of Canada's immigration policy.

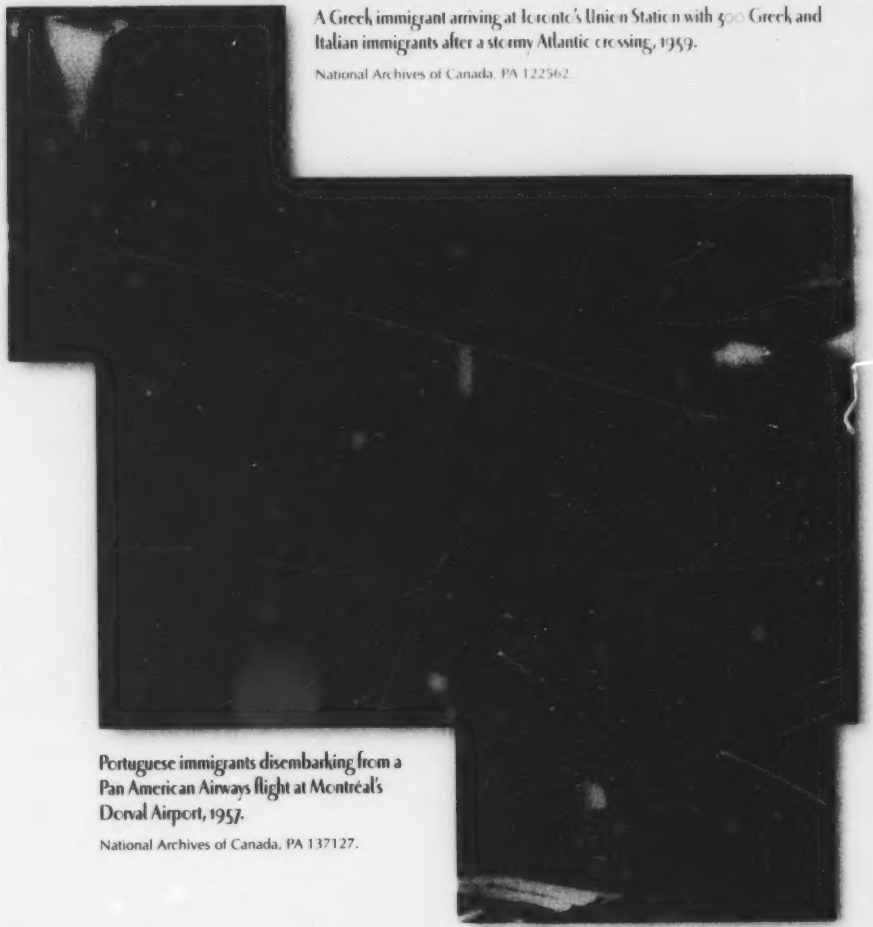
Demonstrating the same confidence that had inspired the 1947 *Canadian Citizenship Act*, Prime Minister Mackenzie King declared in the House of Commons in May of that year that the policy of the government was to foster the growth of Canada's population through immigration. Emphasizing that Canada had the right to discriminate in the selection of its immigrants, King nevertheless stated that Canada had a moral obligation to help refugees and displaced persons. In this connection, he said that the government was "sending immigration officers to examine the situation among the refugee groups, and to take steps looking towards the early admission of some thousands of their number."[41]

King's statement in the House represented an important point in Canada's immigration history. For the first time since the massive immigration of the Sifton period, the federal government intended to use immigration to expand Canada's population and economy.[42]

Between 1946 and 1952, Canada welcomed more than 160,000 European displaced persons and refugees, a substantially higher per capita rate of acceptance than the United States. Although Canada still maintained a preference for British, French, Irish and American immigrants, it gradually opened its doors to thousands of Ukrainian, German, Italian, Greek and Portuguese immigrants who had skills it needed, and who could easily

41. Canada, House of Commons, Debates, May 1, 1947, 2644, as quoted in Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540–1997*, rev. ed. (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), 132.

42. Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540–1997*, rev. ed. (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), 132.



A Greek immigrant arriving at Toronto's Union Station with 500 Greek and Italian immigrants after a stormy Atlantic crossing, 1959.

National Archives of Canada, PA 122562.

Portuguese immigrants disembarking from a Pan American Airways flight at Montréal's Dorval Airport, 1957.

National Archives of Canada, PA 137127.

Portuguese immigrant with immigration officer, Montréal, 1957.

National Archives of Canada, PA 137129.

integrate within Canadian society. In 1947, Canada also repealed the highly discriminatory *Chinese Immigration Act* to allow Chinese residents in Canada to apply for naturalization if they were not already citizens.

The 1950s and 1960s

In its 1950 annual report, the Department of Citizenship and Immigration described the dearth of ocean-going vessels and their infrequent crossings ("there simply weren't enough vessels and crossings to keep up with the demand") and the high costs associated with ocean passage because of fluctuations in the British pound. By the following year, the Department had taken steps to overcome these problems through the unique and innovative Air Transportation Scheme and the Assisted Passage Loan Scheme (APLS). To help offset the shortage of immigrant-shipping berths on the North Atlantic, an agreement was struck with Trans-Canada Air Lines to allocate vacant seats on scheduled TCA flights from the United Kingdom to immigrants, at a cost of £55, the equivalent of a tourist-class ocean passage fare. The government would pay the difference between this lower fare and

the regular fare. Under the APLS, immigrants from Europe whose services were urgently required in Canada were allowed interest-free loans to cover the costs of ocean transportation and inland rail travel. However, the immigrants, who were given two years to repay the loan, had to agree to work for at least one year in the employment class selected for them. Between 1951 and 1960 alone, almost 124,000 people benefited from the APLS, and a total of $20.7 million was given in loans.

In 1951, the Department had to hire 49 additional officers for its overseas offices. At the time, there were 17 immigration offices maintained abroad by the Immigration Branch, located in Athens, Greece; Berne, Switzerland; Brussels, Belgium; Copenhagen, Denmark; Hanover and Karlsruhe, Germany; Paris, France; Rome, Italy; Salzburg, Austria; Stockholm, Sweden; The Hague, Netherlands; Oslo, Norway; London and Liverpool, England; Glasgow, Scotland; Dublin, Ireland; and Belfast, Northern Ireland.

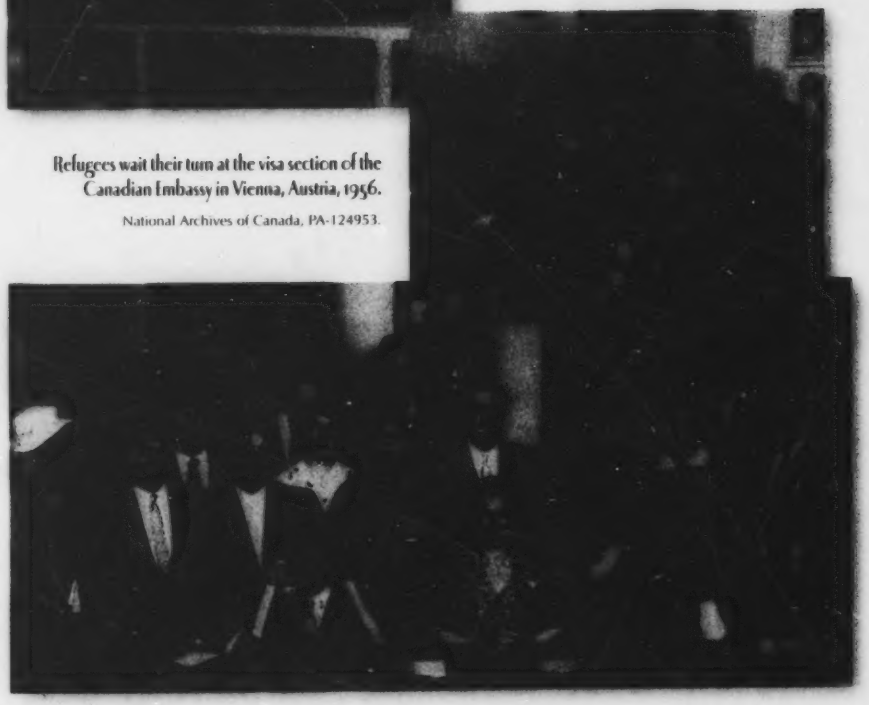
That same year, Canada received more immigrants than it had in any year since 1913, when it admitted more than 194,000. Coping with the volumes

First shift at the Immigration Centre, Montréal International Airport, Dorval, December 1960.

Canadian Immigration Historical Society, McFaul Collection.

Refugees wait their turn at the visa section of the Canadian Embassy in Vienna, Austria, 1956.

National Archives of Canada, PA-124953.



Ellen Fairclough, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, with representatives of the immigrant committees of the National Japanese Canadian Citizenship Association and the Chinese Canadian Citizenship Association, June 1958.

National Archives of Canada, 117593.

Jewish orphan immigrants arriving in Canada, c. 1965.
Jewish Public Library Archives, 83-378-19.

proved to be a challenge. At the end of 1952, Citizenship and Immigration reported that although there was still a shortage of ocean transport, close collaboration with shipping companies had resulted in the scheduling of additional sailings. The Department had also entered into an agreement with the International Refugee Organization (IRO) under which IRO ships transported European immigrants to Canada when regular commercial passage was not available. When the IRO ceased operating at the end of 1952, Canada became a founding member of the new Inter-Governmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM), whose purpose at the time was to arrange for the orderly migration of people from European countries to Australia, South America and North America. The ICEM later became known as the International Organization for Migration, which continues to operate worldwide today.

Throughout the 1950s, the number of immigration offices overseas increased steadily. By 1954, there were 116 Canadians working in overseas missions and additional offices in New Delhi, India and Hong Kong, as well as a consular office assigned to the Canadian Embassy in Tel Aviv, Israel. At the close of 1958, the immigration offices overseas numbered 28.

Early in December 1960, Canada celebrated the arrival in Québec City of the two-millionth postwar immigrant. Anette Toft, 16 years old, who had travelled from Denmark with her mother and brother, was en route to Calgary to rejoin her father, a dental technician.

In the early 1960s, it became clear that Canada's racist immigration policy was

incompatible with its membership in the United Nations and the multiracial Commonwealth. To meet its obligations to these organizations, the country had to open its doors wider. In 1962, when Ellen Fairclough was Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in John Diefenbaker's government, Canada became the first of the top three immigrant-receiving countries—the other two were the United States and Australia—to take steps to eliminate racial discrimination as a major feature of its immigration policies.

In 1966, Lester B. Pearson's government released a white paper that focused on the size and character of the large post-war movement of sponsored immigrants. A year later, it established the Immigration Appeal Board and introduced a points system for the selection of immigrants. Designed to provide an objective method for selecting unsponsored immigrants, the system is still in use today, although in a revised form. Prospective immigrants were assigned points in such categories as education, age, personal characteristics, fluency in English and French, and employment opportunities in Canada. By awarding up to 15 points for occupational demand, the government could also align immigration with labour force requirements. This criterion essentially served as the "thermostat" of the system. Not only was occupational demand accorded 15 points in the 100-point system, but if the applicant was not awarded at least one point in that category, it meant automatic rejection, regardless of how many points were scored on the other factors.

Canada's abolition of those parts of its immigration policy that discriminated against certain countries, together with the introduction of the points system, the development of new transportation technologies that made it cheaper and faster to travel greater distances, and better communication technology that increased awareness of opportunities, opened the doors to immigrants from the developing world. Before 1961, only three percent of immigrants who came to Canada were from Asia. By the mid-1970s, when ocean travel was mostly a thing of the past, the number of European immigrants had fallen dramatically while that of newcomers from Asia and the Middle East made up almost half of all immigrants to Canada each year.

New Trends: 1975–2000

With falling transportation costs, greater access to all points in the world through air travel, and the official removal of discrimination from Canada's immigration policy, the stage was set for big changes in Canada's immigration patterns during the last quarter of the 20th century.

After an unprecedented degree of public consultation, the new *Immigration Act, 1976* came into force on April 10, 1978. (Editor's note: A new Immigration and Refugee Protection Bill was tabled by Citizenship and Immigration Minister Elinor Caplan in the House of Commons in February 2001.) Despite being severely tested later on, the 1976 Act was, and still is, regarded as highly innovative legislation and has remained the cornerstone of all Canadian immigration policy. For the

"One time I crossed
The China Sea
Full of fear
In a small boat
Two typhoons
High waves
Fierce winds
Death was so close

"One time I flew
Over the Pacific Ocean
Full of expectation
For a new life
Also full of uncertainty
For the days in a new
country"[43]

43. Nhung Thuy Hoang, as cited in Canadian Council for Refugees, *The Resettlement of Indochinese Refugees in Canada: Looking Back After Twenty Years* (Montréal: Canadian Council for Refugees, 1999), 2.

A Vietnamese refugee who found work in a supermarket after her arrival in Canada.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 9090.

The expertise gained in earlier large-scale refugee movements to Canada set the stage for one of the biggest humanitarian efforts in Canada's history, supported by the passage of the *Immigration Act, 1976*. When the Vietnam War ended in 1975, tens of thousands of Vietnamese, Laotians and Kampucheans fled the Communist regime. Approximately 6,500 came to Canada as political refugees, most making their homes in Montreal or Toronto. Late in 1978, the number of "boat people" jumped dramatically, as did Canada's intake, so that by 1981, about 11,000 Indochinese refugees had been accepted. Among them were 604 of the 2,500 Vietnamese refugees stranded aboard the freighter *Hai Hong* off the Malaysian coast in 1978. During this period, Canada admitted the highest number of boat people per capita compared to other countries.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 8184.

first time, what Canada was trying to achieve through its immigration policy was laid out in legislation.

The objectives of the Act included supporting Canada's democratic, economic, cultural and social goals, assisting family reunification, and honouring Canada's international obligations with regard to refugees under the *Immigration Act*, the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. Thanks to the 1976 Act, refugees could now be admitted to Canada through several mechanisms, and a process was established to deal with refugee claims made from within the country.

Immigrants and refugees gravitated increasingly to the major cities, particularly Toronto, Montréal and Vancouver. Approximately half of these immigrants were born in Asia or the Middle East. By 1999, almost 51 percent of all immigrants came from the Asia and Pacific region, and the top 10 source countries for that year were the People's Republic of China, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Iran, the United States, Taiwan, Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom.[44] Canada's most recent available statistics tell the story of current refugee trends in the country. In 1999, of the 24,367 refugees who came to Canada, approximately 11,790 had claimed refugee status from within Canada.[45] The total number of refugees that year represented nearly 13 percent of all newcomers, and 33 percent settled in Toronto.[46] The top 10 source countries for refugees in 1999 were, in descending order, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iran, Somalia, Croatia, Pakistan, Iraq, Algeria and India.[47]

Over the years, the Canadian government increased the number of immigration offices and services abroad so that by 1999, full immigration services were being delivered in Ankara, Beijing, Belgrade, Bogota, Bonn, Bucharest, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Colombo, Guatemala, Havana, Hong Kong, Islamabad, Kiev, Kingston, Lima, Mexico, Moscow, Nairobi, New Delhi, Port-au-Prince, Port of Spain, Pretoria, São Paulo, Sydney, Tel Aviv and Warsaw. Taking into account the government's specialized and satellite offices, there were 79 points of service worldwide, indicating the magnitude of Canadian immigration operations overseas.

44. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Facts and Figures 1999: Immigration Overview* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000), 7.

45. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 52.

46. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 56.

47. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 57.

Kosovars to Canada

"Tears and fears
You can see on our faces
Many things on our minds
Our land . . . we left behind
Tears and fears for these guys
You can see in their eyes
Sunshine and hope
As we know already lost
All this darkness in the air
But like a God, you were there
Welcome and hope in this case
We will see on your face
Thanks to you, oh . . . Canada
I feel I'm a safe and lucky guy
Grateful souls we are
For you are helping Kosovars"[48]

48. Gezim Bujupa, as cited in Pamela Currie, "Kosovo: A Unique Humanitarian Experience for Canada," *Vis-à-Vis* (Summer/Fall 1999): 12.

Lucienne Robillard (right), Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, welcoming a refugee from Kosovo at Canadian Forces Base Trenton, Ontario, 1999.

Photographer: Corporal François Charest, Department of National Defence

Canada's most recent large-scale refugee assistance effort occurred in 1999, when the country took in refugees from Kosovo. Although Canada had often responded to calls from the United Nations for resettlement assistance, this was the first time it participated in an emergency evacuation. Canada's role was to provide temporary shelter for the refugees, although they could apply for permanent resident status once here. Initially, Canada had intended to offer safe haven to 5,000 refugees, but the number ultimately grew to 7,000. The Canadian Red Cross, the Salvation Army, refugee-serving organizations, federal and provincial governments, and sponsors all participated in this massive Canadian humanitarian effort. Beginning in May 1999, flights carrying the refugees alternately landed at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Trenton, Ontario, and CFB Greenwood, Nova Scotia. Although some of the Kosovars decided to remain in Canada, many yearned to go back home. Happily, a peace agreement was reached, and the first repatriation flight to Macedonia flew out of Halifax on July 7.

Photographer: Corporal François Charest, Department of National Defence.

The Kosovar Refugees

On May 4, 1999, the first evacuation flight of Kosovar refugees arrived at CFB Trenton in Ontario. By May 28, more than 5,000 refugees had been flown to Canada under the emergency evacuation program, and more continued to come under the fast-track family reunification program. Norman Hopkins, a Citizenship and Immigration employee, described a typical flight arrival as follows:

"For each and every plane that arrived, right from the get-go, there was an amazing outpouring of welcome, of solace, of fun. Air Force officers, rank-and-file and on- and off-duty police officers, medical professionals, Customs inspectors, Red Cross volunteers and, of course, Citizenship and Immigration (CIC) staff were there to offer smiles, give kids teddy bears, shake hands, try to hug away tears, have a pick-up game of basketball or throw a football with the teens, and trade 'high fives' with the kids.

"A typical arrival proceeded somewhat along the following lines. An Airbus with some 270 Kosovar refugees on board would land at about 6:30 p.m. Waiting at the bottom of the plane steps would be a delegation of medical people, there to take anyone who needed medical aid directly to the fully equipped medical station set up in the reception centre (a converted gymnasium on the base), where a full medical assessment and primary treatment would be done. This group usually consisted of up to 80 people—about 10 ill people and their families—and they would have been given either a red or yellow medical designation, red meaning the person was more seriously ill.

"Everyone given a green medical designation was taken to a hangar where Agrifood and Agriculture Canada inspected footwear for soil, a possible carrier of disease. If shoes or boots were just a little soiled, they were washed; if heavily soiled, new shoes were issued and the old ones were destroyed. In this same building, Red Cross volunteers welcomed them with warm handshakes and gave teddy bears and paper Canadian flags to the kids and blankets to anyone who needed them.

"In the next building, Customs quickly processed the refugees and they then boarded buses that would take them to the sleeping quarters, where two CIC officers worked with DND personnel to assign families to rooms and beds."[49]

49 Norman Hopkins, "They Are Us," Visa 2, no. 5 (September–October 1999): 13.

Canada is home to people from all over the world.

Photographer: Corporal François Charest, Department of National Defence.

Comstock, Inc.

Canada will become even more cosmopolitan and multicultural in this century. It is predicted that by 2016, visible minorities will make up 20 percent of the population. In Toronto, for example, the foreign-born are on the verge of outnumbering the native-born. There is no sign that future immigrants will distribute themselves more evenly across the country. In fact, the concentration of immigrants in Canada's major cities, particularly Toronto, Montréal and Vancouver, is likely to increase.

As pointed out in *Strangers at Our Gates*, "Another reality is the growing international population pressures that are being felt on Canada's borders. The influx of 'economic migrants' in the 1980s served notice to Canadians that migratory patterns around the world would soon force a rethinking of Canada's immigration policy. At issue was the rapid growth of the world's population and Canada's response to the population pressures created by it."[50] Projections indicate the world's population will grow to 8 billion by 2020, from an estimated 6.1 billion in 2000.

The Canadian government's policy is to continue to select newcomers to the country who can make positive economic and other contributions to Canadian life, while also maintaining the important family reunification and refugee protection programs. A key priority is to protect the integrity of the selection process from the impact of the large, population-driven and essentially self-directed movement of migrants seeking better economic prospects in other countries.

If Canada is to meet these policy objectives in the new environment of global air transportation, migration management increasingly needs to include the capacity to identify and interdict irregular migrants. The traditional use of the visa as a tool for screening immigrants and visitors is still important, but it is no longer sufficient. New partnerships have been developed,

50. Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 190.

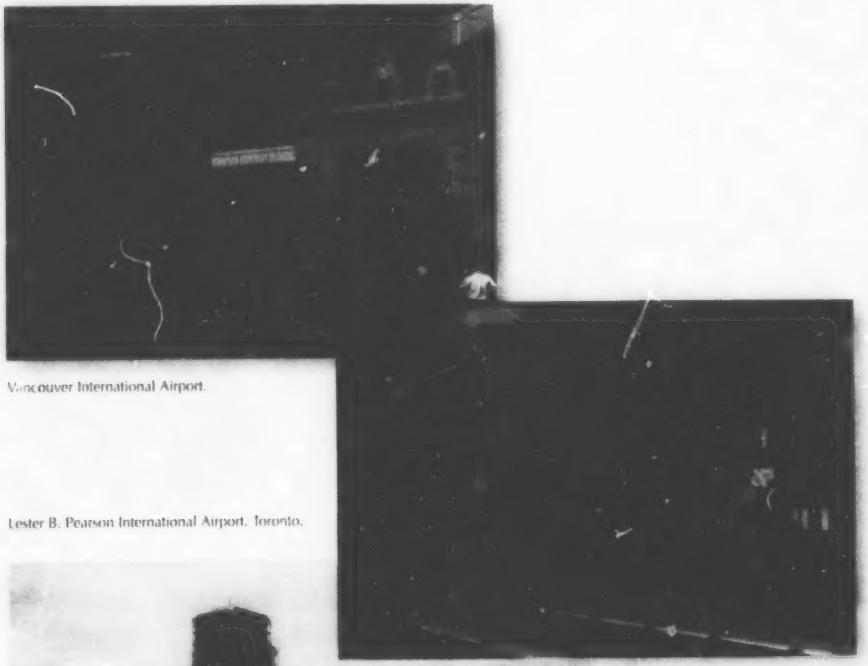
and agreements are in place with 56 carriers to assist them in their legal obligation to ensure that passengers are screened for proper documents before departure to Canada. A worldwide network of immigration control officers has been established to address these issues overseas and to interdict irregular migrants before they reach Canada.

It is also becoming more important to combat the use of these carriers by sophisticated smuggling organizations, a global problem requiring a global response. In December 2000, Canada signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (adopted by the United Nations General Assembly the month before). The Convention is supplemented by two protocols: the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. These developments will reshape the way in which Canada will respond to migration pressures and transportation shifts in the new millennium.

Meanwhile, air carriers in the business of moving people around the world experienced many fluctuations in their industry in the past quarter century. High interest rates, debt, fuel costs, labour demands and fierce competition have caused many airlines to lose money. Some have survived, but others have had to fold their operations. Air carriers have reacted to this harsh business climate by forming alliances to coordinate fleet purchases, training, computer system development, scheduling, joint marketing and travel agency commissions. By the end of the 1990s, economic conditions had gradually improved and the world's airlines were riding the crest of an economic upswing that saw increasing numbers of people travelling to and from a wide range of destinations.

The volume of air travellers is impressive. Vancouver International Airport (VIA), for example, handles approximately 15 million passengers every year. In 1999, immigration authorities at VIA processed 42,624 immigrants, while Toronto's Lester B. Pearson International Airport served more than 26 million passengers, of whom 71,788 were immigrants. In addition to these numbers, thousands of temporary workers, visitors and foreign students use airports as points of entry to Canada. Other airports in Canada that handle more than seven million passengers each year are Montréal-Dorval and Calgary, while Edmonton, Halifax, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Mirabel and Victoria serve over a million people annually. Airports in Québec, St. John's, Regina, Saskatoon and Kelowna handle between half a million and one million passengers each year. Currently, Canada's 26 largest and busiest airports handle 94 percent of all scheduled air passenger and cargo traffic in Canada.

The last two decades of the 20th century brought changes in the ownership structures of Canadian airports. By 1987, the government owned 138 airports, 91 of which it operated, including all nine international airports. In 1994, with the objective of modernizing, privatizing and commercializing air transport in the country, the federal government announced it would lease all its major



Vancouver International Airport.

Lester B. Pearson International Airport, Toronto.

Montréal-Dorval International Airport.

Canada's 26 largest and busiest airports account for 94 percent of the country's passenger and cargo traffic.

Citizenship and Immigration collection.

airports and reduce funding to the smaller ones that were losing money.

As the gateways to Canada, airports are complex places of business that ensure the movement of large volumes of people and goods from all over the world. Transactions revolve around a host of business activities unlike the old days when, for example, Pier 21's main reason for being was to submit newcomers and visitors to the immigration process. Given that the business priorities of today's airports, airlines and government departments may differ, it is important that the movement of people and goods to Canada continue to serve the interests of both the private and public sectors.

Airport Developments: Future Challenges in the Global Village

In the 21st century, airports will face significant challenges in coping with new technology, larger and faster aircraft, and rising numbers of passengers. International passenger traffic in Canadian airports has increased by 29 percent over the past five years. The projected increase

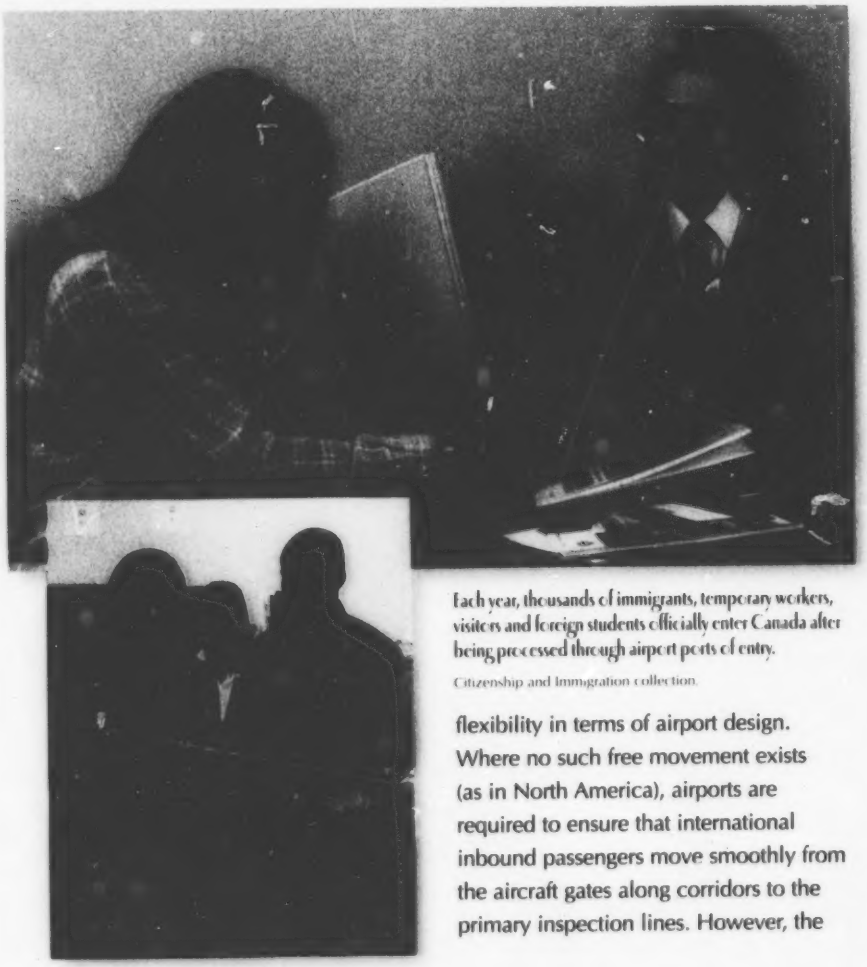
For many years, aircraft have been moving Canadians and their goods across the country and around the world. In turn, people arrive in Canada by air from all over the world, as visitors, students, temporary workers, immigrants, refugees and business people. Air transport in Canada, which started so tentatively early in the 20th century, has become integral to society.

Photographer: Chris Mikula, *The Ottawa Citizen*

at the three major Canadian airports (Vancouver, Toronto and Montréal) is estimated at a further 40 percent over the next five years. On specific popular routes (Los Angeles to Vancouver, New York to Toronto, and Miami to Montréal), it is estimated that the number of passengers will double over the next decade.

The airport business is now widely recognized as a key component of the travel industry. Many countries have recently allowed independent airport authorities to assume greater control over airport operations. This in turn has promoted strong marketing and competition among airports, all of which search for business opportunities ranging from landing rights to retail opportunities. In Canada, all three major airports are modernizing their terminals, and others are following suit.

At the same time, the sheer volume of people in security control zones presents significant challenges to control authorities in terms of the movement of people and goods. The traditional model, whereby all inbound international passengers present a passport to an official and then collect their baggage for examination by another official before proceeding, may need to evolve to meet the challenges of the future. For example, the free movement of people and goods within the European Union (EU) affords greater



Each year, thousands of immigrants, temporary workers, visitors and foreign students officially enter Canada after being processed through airport ports of entry.

Citizenship and Immigration collection.

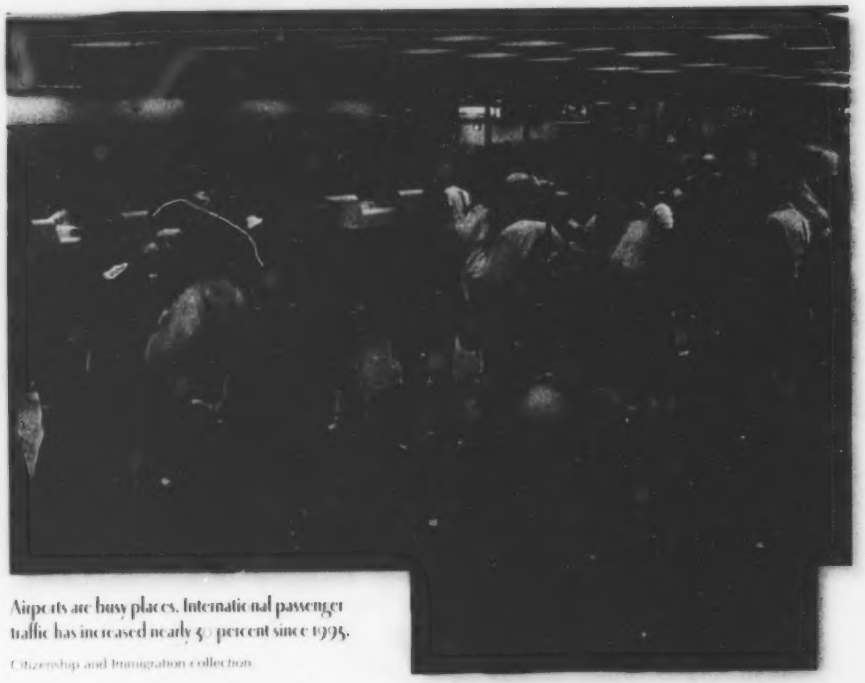
flexibility in terms of airport design. Where no such free movement exists (as in North America), airports are required to ensure that international inbound passengers move smoothly from the aircraft gates along corridors to the primary inspection lines. However, the more entrepreneurial airport manager might prefer to offer as many retail outlets as possible to inbound and outbound passengers, preferably in one common lounge. Furthermore, the requirement to inspect all international arrivals does not sit well with the concept of airport hubs that attract transit passengers, many of whom present a low risk and require little more than a comfortable refreshment zone, fast connections to their destinations, and proper baggage transfer.

Airport policies vary widely across the world, and they are inextricably linked to political considerations. Most countries welcome increased business at airports, which in turn provides increased revenue and greater employment opportunities within airport catchment areas. The privatization of airports offers significant occasions to bring commerce into the industry, and profits can be considerable. At the same time, airport designs need to conform to the established standards of international control. Therefore, the relationship among airport authorities, airlines and governments becomes

increasingly relevant in determining how the airport of the future will look.

Many countries are now looking more closely at risk assessment for airports in recognition of the fact that over 99 percent of international traffic is considered low risk and should be moved through airports as quickly as possible. That being said, it remains necessary to intercept those who are only too eager to exploit any weaknesses in the system for their own ends.

In Europe, the movement of EU nationals through most airports within the Union is now free of "borders," although certain EU countries (including the United Kingdom and Ireland) have chosen to retain their borders. It is therefore possible to travel around much of Europe with relatively little challenge to one's status. EU nationals entering the Union from outside the EU are themselves now subject to only cursory document checks. Non-EU nationals are still required to present themselves for inspection, although many countries offer air side transit facilities to enable an international traveller to pass through an airport and on to another country without challenge.



Airports are busy places. International passenger traffic has increased nearly 50 percent since 1995.

Citizenship and Immigration collection

United States inspection agencies provide preclearance services at several Canadian airports for passengers destined for the United States. This allows passengers to clear U.S. inspection prior to their arrival in the United States. Furthermore, since 1997, U.S.-bound passengers transiting through Canada have been able to access the U.S. preclearance facilities at Vancouver International Airport without presenting themselves to Canadian authorities for inspection. And, under the

Intransit Preclearance Program, Citizenship and Immigration Canada has also authorized individuals from select countries, whose nationals would otherwise require a visa for entry into Canada, to transit without visa en route to or from the United States. These passengers are considered low risk, and they must travel on airlines that have signed a memorandum of understanding with both the Canadian and U.S. inspection services. Travel must also be continuous, without any need to leave the arrivals area.

However, in North America, there is no real concept of freedom of movement across national borders, and therefore little scope for the intermingling of international inbound and outbound passengers. Most countries recognize that a potential solution would be to invest in technology (i.e., counterfeit-proof travel documents) and intelligence, and to focus their resources on specific areas of system abuse while making the best use of passenger information and passenger self-screening. For example, the colour-coded approach to customs clearance at British airports is in direct contrast to the Canadian approach, which requires a personal declaration and a face-to-face interview with a customs officer on every occasion. The effect on airport flows and passenger waiting times is self-evident. It is no wonder, then, that airports and airlines want to participate in any program that might expedite passage.

In an ideal world, all people would freely travel wherever they wished, without hindrance. Airports would configure terminals to suit the customer, without regard to control configurations and security. In the real world, however, this is no more than a myth. Sovereign countries demand the right to control admission at their borders, and borders increasingly focus on airports as air traffic continues to expand. At the end of the day, a balance needs to be struck between ensuring the protection of borders and the facilitation of legitimate passenger traffic, and recognizing the economic impact that vibrant airports can have on the surrounding communities.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Over 60 years ago, in a paper presented to the Engineering Institute of Canada, J.A. Wilson wrote that "mankind had always travelled on the face of the earth and water and new inventions for doing so came gradually. Their adoption required little mental readjustment. Human flight, though throughout the ages the dream of the poet and scientist, was something entirely new."[51] Fifty-three years later, David MacKenzie captured the essence of Wilson's thought when he wrote, "Never before could natural obstacles like mountains, oceans, and deserts be crossed so easily; never again would the political boundaries between nations appear impregnable."[52]

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees currently assists some 22 million refugees and displaced people worldwide,[53] and the number increases each year. The Worldwatch Institute estimates that by the mid-1990s, more than 125 million people were living outside the countries of their birth.[54] Experts say these numbers are unlikely to decrease and that, on the contrary, increases in world population are likely to lead to more international migration and a corresponding pressure on developed countries to accept greater numbers of immigrants, particularly refugees. (Canada personally experienced this pressure in the summer of 1999 when several boats carrying Chinese migrants arrived off the coast of British Columbia.)

Canada strives to attract immigrants who will help meet the country's economic and social needs even as it tries to help

51. J.A. Wilson, "The World's Airway System," paper presented to the Engineering Institute of Canada, Hamilton, Ont., February 6–7, 1936, 2.

52. MacKenzie, 3–4.

53. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, preface to *The State of the World's Refugees: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), ix.

54. Hal Kane, *The Hour of Departure: Forces That Create Refugees and Migrants*, Worldwatch Paper 125 (Washington, D.C.: Worldwatch Institute, 1995), 5.

genuine refugees through a fair and faster refugee determination process. Maintaining the integrity of the immigration and refugee systems includes protecting the rights of legitimate immigrants. At the same time, it means guarding Canada from the threats posed by transnational crime, and dealing fairly with victims of international trafficking in human cargo. Canadian authorities whose job it is to apply the law and to determine who is eligible to enter the country, either temporarily or as a permanent resident, are on the very front line of this endeavour.

Millions worldwide are stateless and on the move. Information is exchanged easily and instantly across continents. Travel time and transportation costs have fallen drastically. Moreover, Canada has obligations to international organizations such as the United Nations. Against this global backdrop, controlling Canada's borders can seem to be an almost impossible task, but the country's immigration system, though not without its flaws, has become a model for similar systems all over the world. Canada's policies have resulted in a culturally diverse country in which Canadians can take pride.

It is clear, however, that even greater challenges lie ahead. Immigration issues will continue to have a high profile in this country because they have to do with the fundamentals of nationhood—what a nation is and where it is going. And, for that same reason, the decisions made at the beginning of the third millennium will have a profound influence on the type of country that emerges in the future.

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